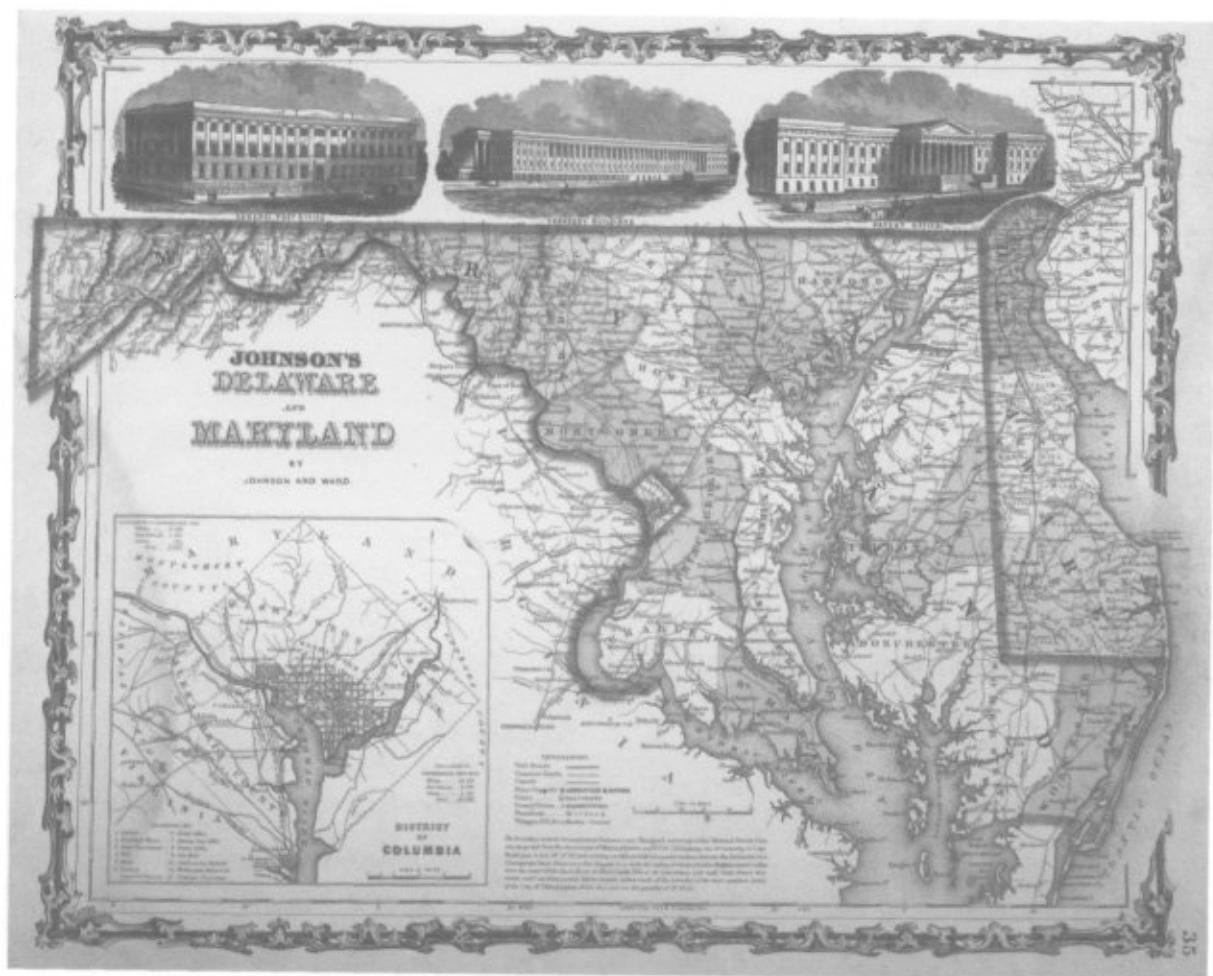


Historical Magazine



Centennial Edition

THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded 1844

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The Maryland Historical Magazine

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Letters may be edited for space and clarity. All articles will be acknowledged, but only those accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope will be returned. Submissions should be printed or typed manuscript. Address Editor, *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21201. Include name, address, and daytime telephone number. Once accepted, articles should be on 3.5-inch disks (MS Word or PC convertible format), or CDs, or may be emailed to rcottom@mdhs.org. Guidelines for contributors are available on our Web site at www.mdhs.org.

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MARYLAND

Historical Magazine

VOLUME 100, No. 3 (FALL 2005)

CENTENNIAL EDITION

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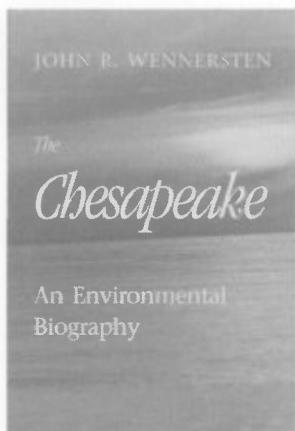
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Johnson & Ward, Johnson's Delaware and Maryland, 1864. (*Maryland Historical Society.*)

Editor's Notebook

One Picture Is Worth . . .



Rarely in this column do we call attention to the staff of this press, but circumstances dictate that we pay tribute to a valued colleague who has toiled in entirely undeserved obscurity.

David B. Prencipe until recently has been our staff photographer and head of Photo Services. He joined us seven years ago as a matter of chance, since he happened to be in an office into which we were trying to move a very heavy bookshelf. He was an intern then, but when we needed help he pitched in while others stood by in idle bemusement. Needless to say, when the opportunity arose, we lost no time in hiring him.

Those seven years have been extraordinary, as you can see in the catalog accompanying this issue of the journal, right down to the cover shot. Many of the books we've issued bear his mark. He spent one Thanksgiving holiday afternoon standing in the mud and cold on the Eastern Shore beside the bay, snapping a photograph every fifteen minutes until he had the cover for *The Chesapeake: An Environmental Biography*. He rephotographed all 330 images in *Maryland History in Prints, 1749–1900* to get the color just right, and performed the same service for *The Patapsco River Valley: Cradle of the Industrial Revolution in Maryland*. By the time we published *The Diary of William Faris*, his ability to turn film into digital files that portrayed images accurately when the ink hit the paper was such that we no longer had to ask the printer to scan original art, saving us thousands of dollars in production costs. He created the chapter-opening artwork and the cover art for *On Afric's Shore*, and *The Great Baltimore Fire* was in some ways his book. Again he saved us thousands, but this time he also identified several heretofore puzzling photographs and found wondrous details hidden in others. In a single afternoon he fiddled with all forty-five portraits in *African American Leaders of Maryland*, rendering them press-ready. Then of course there are the countless images he routinely located, shot, scanned, and adjusted at the last minute for this journal.

Dave's expertise, institutional knowledge, and superb artistry are now lost to us, gone the way of many such things these days. His job, and that of his long-time assistant, Ruth Mitchell, were eliminated in a recent reorganization that removed Photo Services from the Press and placed it in the Library. The result will be fewer illustrations in this journal and fewer and more expensive illustrated books from this Press. We shall greatly miss Dave Prencipe, and, we suspect, so will you.

R.I.C.

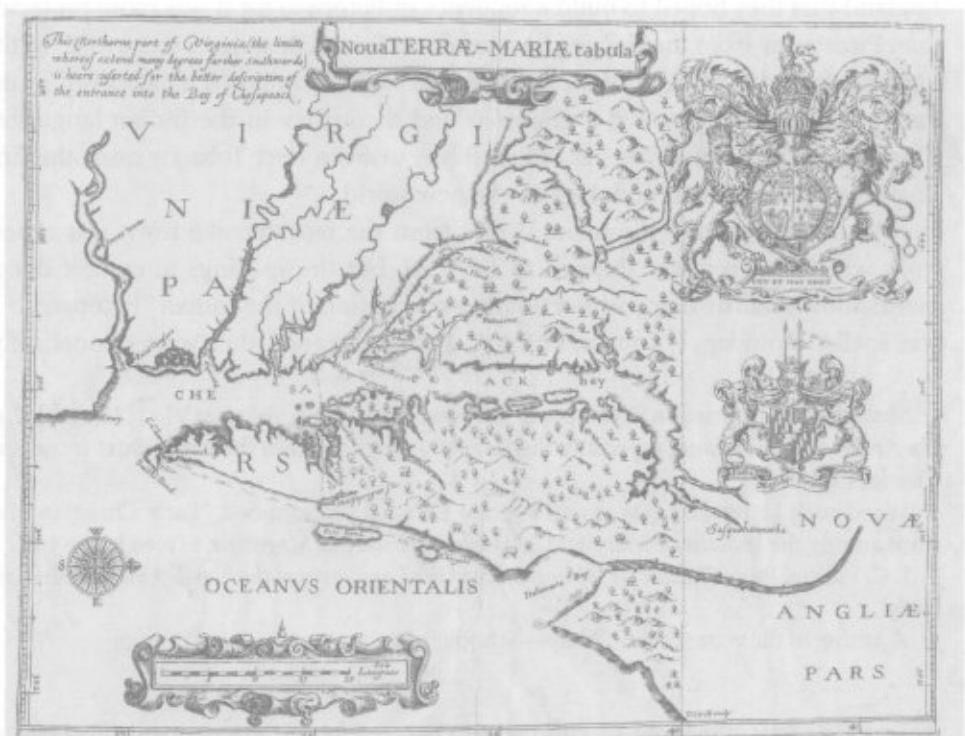
Centennial Notes

This third number of the centennial volume features those articles deemed the best of nineteenth-century history published in these pages. The editors faced particular challenges in selecting which to reprint. Articles on the Civil War from veterans' pens and scholars' keyboards could easily have consumed every page of this expanded issue, but we wanted to present a broader look at nineteenth-century Maryland, one that encompasses medicine, machine politics, and a wistfully written memoir of an old Southern Maryland town. The text of these articles is reprinted as first published, but without most of the original art. Issues of space, ownership, permission, and cost determined which images we could use.

Correction

The map identified as the first edition of John Ogilby's *Nova Terrae-Mariae Tabula*, printed on page 31 of the spring issue, 100 (2005), is not the one that appeared in *A Relation of Maryland*, 1635. Rather, it is the cartographer's 1671 revised map, drafted for his atlas, *America*. The 1635 version, also known as the "Lord Baltimore map" did appear in Fred Fausz, "Present at the Creation" in 1984 and is shown below. We thank member John D. Hendrickson II for bringing the error to our attention.

P.D.A.



Port Tobacco, Lost Town of Maryland

ETHEL ROBY HAYDEN

In a valley near the point where the Potomac River bends around the lower end of Charles County lies the site of Port Tobacco, for over two centuries the county seat of Charles County, and one of the most important of early Maryland little towns. A few houses remain, and here and there by scraping an inch of soil, one may uncover an ancient brick sidewalk; but mostly now the barns and tobacco fields cover the place where the town flourished.

The early history of Port Tobacco antedates Charles County by at least sixteen years.¹ About the year 1639, Father Andrew White, from the Jesuit mission at St. Mary's, converted to Christianity the Queen of the Potopaco Indians and 130 of her subjects. The Indians provided one of the largest wigwams for the priest, and while his journeys over the river ways among the Indians were frequent, the little Potopaco village was his home for the greater part of his stay in Maryland.

Here he was joined in 1640 by Father Roger Rigbie, who wrote his superiors in England that they hoped to build a residence in Potopaco for it was more protected than Piscataway from the warring Susquehannocks and Senecas of the north.² In the long evenings, by the light of a candle, Father White composed a catechism in the native dialect and compiled a grammar and dictionary in the Indian language.³ This was before Eliot wrote his Indian Bible, so from Port Tobacco came the first English work on Indian philology in the new world.

We often read that the name comes from the fact that the town was a port from which tobacco was shipped to England, but the spellings in earliest documents show that the name was certainly a corruption of the Indian "Potopaco."⁴ It was spelled Potobag, Potopace, Potobac, Potobacke and other ways phonetically;

1. Much of the information in this paper has been drawn from Volumes VIII, LIII and LX, of the *Archives of Maryland*, especially the last two, which contain the early court records of Charles County.

2. Woodstock Letters, LX, 343 et seq. See also Bernard U. Campbell, "Early Christian Missions among the Indians of Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 1 (1906): 293-316.

3. J. C. Pilling, *Proof Sheets of a Bibliography of the Languages of the North American Indians* (1885).

4. A jutting of the water inland; a bay—Schoolcraft.

This article first appeared in volume 40 (1945). The author (?-1953), a native of Charles County, wrote numerous articles for the periodical press.

the searcher becomes convinced that though Charles County owes much to tobacco, it was the red man and not the weed who gave a name to its most cherished town—a name which has stuck through the years with amusing persistency.

Early in the 17th century Job Chandler owned lands on the creek and in State documents the village was called Chandlerstown. Then the Assembly erected a town to be called Charlestown. First this town was to be laid off "in His Lordship's forest nigh Humphrey Warren's plantation on the Wicomico River," but nothing was done about it and the Assembly decided that Charlestown should be "at the court house at the head of Port Tobacco creek" but that "lot holders in the old Chandler's town shall retain their lots." Years later the Assembly again decided that the name Charlestown should be changed to Port Tobacco. All this was effected only on paper and meant not a thing to anybody. Throughout the years of the Assembly's decisions the town continued to be known as Port Tobacco.

Charles County has two distinct periods of history; that of the old Charles County and the Charles County of the present day. Old Charles County came into formal existence on November 2, 1650. In the winter of that year Robert Brooke arrived in Maryland with his second wife, 10 children, 28 servants and a commission dated London, September 20, 1649, making him commander of a county to be newly erected and called Charles. He also held a commission as a member of the Council of Maryland. Lands were surveyed, boundaries set and on November 2, 1650, the first Charles County came into being. Mr. Brooke agreed to bring more colonists to the new county at his own expense, and he commissioned his son, Baker Brooke, as commander thereof. After a few years the new county failed to work out in accord with the financial expectations of the Governor and Council and it was abolished. On April 15, 1658, the new Charles County was erected. Court at first was held in inns and private houses in or near Port Tobacco and later the village became the established county seat. Soon it began to take on the air of an English village. The entire population of Charles County is estimated to have been only 800 in 1658, increasing to 1500 by 1665.⁵ The settlers must have been contracted largely in and around Port Tobacco, for the court records of that period and a few years afterward give the names of 30 or more householders in the town. Some of those mentioned in these records are Job Chandler; John Jenkins; William Robinson, carpenter; Henerie Moore; Robert Sly, merchant; Edward Parks; Henry Adams; George Thompson; Zachery Wade; Thomas Maris; Edmund Lindsey; Robert Troop; John Neuil; Thomas Hussey; Danell Gordion, constable; Robert Taylor; Simon Oursees; Joseph Harrison; Clemont Theobold; John Scherman; Francis Wine, cooper; Henry Mees; James and Robert Littlepage; Abraham Rouse; John Pain; Philip Bourne, merchant; Gils Glour, merchant; John

5. Introduction to the *Archives of Maryland*, LIII, p. xvii.

Rowley; John Roberts; and George English. There must have been other families whose names did not get into the court records.

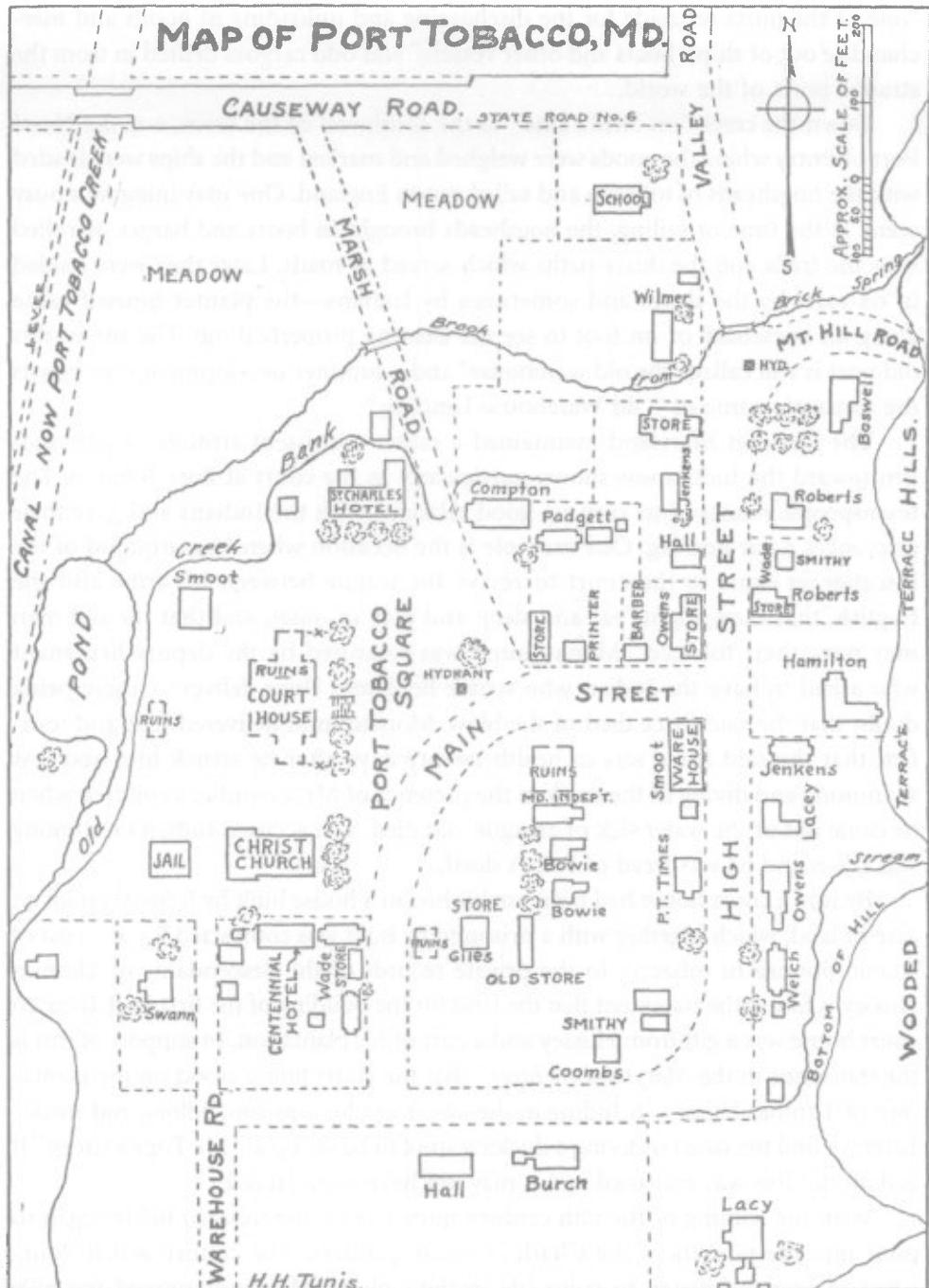
There were two churches at or near Port Tobacco at the time, the Catholic church on the creek and the English church. Father Thomas Copley built a small house and a church on the creek about this time. The Rev. Mr. William Pusey Painter says Port Tobacco is the mother parish of Charles County and that the church there was standing as early as 1683, called Christ Church, of which the Rev. Mr. Moore was the first pastor.⁶ The church of which Mr. Painter speaks was already old in 1683 and stood on the west side of the creek.

The Rev. Mr. Doughtie is often met with in records and has been mentioned as the first Episcopal pastor in Port Tobacco. He probably lived in Port Tobacco for a time, but it is unlikely he had a church there. He was none too savory a figure and doubtless had no connection with the Church of England. He is recorded as performing some ministerial duties, but to what sect he belonged has never been satisfactorily determined.

The town was built first on the west side of the creek and later drifted to the east side. The change may have been made because of the behavior of the waters and the erosion of the hills. Old Christ Church had a grave yard on the west side which is now inundated. The tops of the stones were visible fifty years ago. An excavation of these old grave stones might well repay the student of Charles County history. Here may be the grave of Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, for which historians have long made fruitless search. A case for it is built up by a recent statement that he is believed to have been buried in Charleston, S.C. The Maryland Historical Society has a letter from one Lt. Col. Jenifer, dated "Charles Town," Sept. 10, 1829. Its content shows that it was written from Port Tobacco, so the Jenifers must have used the Assembly name. Their plantation was but two miles away, they were Episcopalians and would naturally have been buried in Christ Church grave yard. This assumption must await the uncovering of the old stones in the marsh.

Even the court records of these early days convince us that life in Port Tobacco was by no means dull. The townspeople traded and visited, sang and prayed; slandered their neighbors and got hauled into court for it; they played on the cittern, a sort of guitar, hunted and fished in the streams and river, and for the bounty the county offered, they shot the wolves that threatened their door yards. The price of a wolf's head was 100 pounds of tobacco and the public records oft times show bounties for three and four wolves at a time to one man. Port Tobacco handled its wolf problem with more wisdom than did Paris. Along the river there were pirates and rumors of pirates. The creek was wide and the ships sailed up to the edge of the town, bringing merchandise from England and sometimes strange foreign figures to create a sensation in the streets and inns; for Port Tobacco was

6. *History of Durham Parish, Charles County* (1894).



Drawn by Howard H. Tunis from sketch representing Port Tobacco about 1894 furnished by R. G. Barbour of Charles County, former resident of the town.

"one of the ports set aside for the discharging and unloading of goods and merchandise out of ships, boats and other vessels," and odd cargoes drifted in from the strange ports of the world.

Down the creek "on Neal's land" to the southwest of the town, was the Naval Port of Entry where the goods were weighed and marked and the ships were loaded with the hogsheads of tobacco and sailed out to England. One may imagine a busy scene at the time of sailing, the hogsheads brought in boats and barges or rolled over the trails and the dusty paths which served as roads. Later they were hauled in ox-carts by the slaves and sometimes by Indians—the planter himself came along on horseback or on foot to see the clearing properly done. The site of this old port is still called "the old warehouse" and a summer development now boasts the romantic name of "Old Warehouse Landing."

The fact that Maryland maintained a rather consistent attitude of paternalism toward the Indian was shown particularly in the court at Port Tobacco. The townspeople managed to keep up good relations with the Indians and gave their grievances a fair hearing. One example is the occasion when Monatquund of the Piscataways came to the court to revive the league between his tribe and the English, that they might "eat and sleep and play in quiet, and that the old men may have their tobacco." Monatquund was reassured by the deputy lieutenant who asked to have the Indian who struck Benjamin Price delivered, there being doubt that the said Price died of the blow. Monatquund delivered him and testified that the said Price was in health twenty days after he struck him and was swimming and diving in the creek in the presence of Mr. Chandler's children when he came out of the water sick of an ague and died. The accused Indian's testimony was taken and he was freed of Price's death.

By 1674 a court house had been established in a house built by John Allen on an acre of land, which together with a prison to be built was contracted for at a cost of 20,000 pounds of tobacco. In the private records of the descendants of Thomas Hussey is found the statement that the land for the building of the first Port Tobacco court house was a gift from Hussey and a part of his plantation. In support of this is the statement in the *Maryland Archives*⁷ that the court house stood on the plantation of Thomas Hussey, including in the one-acre plot a prison, pillory, and stocks. Later we find the court ordering a ducking stool to be set up at "Mr. Pope's Creek." It is doubtful this was ever used and it may not have materialized.

With the coming of the 18th century money from the tobacco fields began to pour into the pockets of the Charles County planters. The culture which flourished in England began to color life in the Colony. Mansions topped the hills which overlooked Port Tobacco and in the town the more primitive houses were being replaced by dwellings of pretensions. Townsmen, growing thoughtful of

7. *Archives of Maryland*, Vol. VIII, p. 24-26.

their safety, appealed to the Assembly to have wooden chimneys abandoned, and "wattling fences" within the town were frowned upon.⁸

In 1740 when Governor Ogle, under Royal instruction, ordered a call to arms for the so-called "expedition against Cartagena" the town resounded with the fife and drum of the recruiting officer. Port Tobacco sent some men, we know, and though history is all too silent on Maryland's part in that expedition, it has supplied the name of at least one officer from Port Tobacco, Captain William Chandler.

As the community grew rich and ambitious, the sons, and sometimes the daughters, of the wealthier families were sent to England to be educated, or, in the case of the Catholics to Belgium and France. In the autumn of 1752 Thomas Kean, the actor manager who had been playing in Williamsburg, took his company to Port Tobacco where *The Beggar's Opera* was presented and likely the entire repertoire of the summer season at Annapolis. Old newspapers give the list as *Richard III*, Dryden's *Spanish Friar*, Farquhar's *Sir Harry Wildair* and several farces. Kean was an artist of some talent himself and he had drawn from the professional group of William Hallam to complete a creditable company. Dunlap says it was Hallam's original company that played in Port Tobacco, but Hornblow shows this to be a mistake, and that it was the Thomas Kean Company. Both historians, however, agree that the company met with much success and that Port Tobacco was a town of "wealth and consequence" and provided for the drama a reception equal to any in the colonies.⁹ It is regretted that no record exists to show in what house the plays were held. Port Tobacco and Marlboro, like Annapolis and Williamsburg, probably sent Negro servants early in the evening to hold the seats until time for the play to begin. They must have had a pleasant hour hustling through the town in the best starched manner to sit in the improvised theatres until the play was ready. It was the day of Peg Woffington and David Garrick, a brilliant one for the London stage; and the intense interest of London society in the restored drama was reflected in the life across the sea.

In 1753 Christ Church was rebuilt of brick on its original site, and a few years later there was read in the Assembly a bill to empower the justices of Charles County to levy on the taxable inhabitants of Port Tobacco Parish for money to support an organist for the church. Mr. Gustavus Brown, a native of Scotland and a prominent member of the parish, offered to give an organ if the parish would support an organist. About the same time the account books of Father

8. A wattling fence is described as follows: "A ditch and low mud fence was cast up, on the top of which was drove in stakes 3 feet high and a foot asunder, between which was wove green branches of cedar as close as possible with the bushes outward"— Robert Honyman, *Colonial Panorama, 1773* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1939). When the cedar had been well dried by the summer suns these fences must have been anything but beautiful.

9. William Dunlap, *History of the American Theatre* (N. Y., 1832); Arthur Hornblow, *History of the Theatre in America* (Phila., 1919).

George Hunter, pastor of the church at St. Thomas Manor, show that he paid an organist twenty pounds a year, the organ having been bought in Philadelphia at a cost of fifty pounds. Thus church music was an early institution in Port Tobacco, and the fact duly came to the attention of the Assembly.¹⁰

In the years before the Revolution diarists provided us with a wealth of data. A half day's ride on horseback from Laidler's Ferry, travelers from the south often stayed a day or two at Port Tobacco before continuing up the Post Road to Philadelphia and New England. Dr. Robert Honyman describes a short stay in the town. His journal, now the property of the Huntington Library, says he reached Port Tobacco an hour before sunset on March 2, 1775.

When I got there I went out into a field by the town and saw a company of about 60 gentlemen learning the military exercise, and then I went and called on Mr. Francis Walker, whose relatives are my father's near neighbors in Scotland. I took him to my lodgings where he stayed with me all night. Port Tobacco is about as big as New Castle [Delaware] and is seated between hills at the top of Port Tobacco Creek, which two miles below falls into the Potomac, and only carries small craft now. There are six stores in the place, four of them Scotch. Near the town is a Roman Catholic chapel, very elegant with fine house adjoining, where live four or five Jesuit priests. They have a fine estate of 10,000 acres and two or three hundred negroes [St. Thomas Manor]. There is also a very pretty church of free stone with an organ in it. There is also a warehouse for tobacco.

An interesting item of this account is mention of a free-stone church. This, of course, was Christ Church, though modern historians say it was still of brick as late as the 19th century. The church was evidently new when Dr. Honyman saw it in 1775, and the same one of which this recent account is given: "Tradition has it that a building called Christ Church was removed and built on another site in Port Tobacco (probably the third or fourth building) in 1818. There is a record of its consecration by Bishop Kemp on June 28, 1818. In 1884 this colonial church of brick was torn down and rebuilt of stone."¹¹ The confused years of the early republican period could well have delayed the consecration until 1818, but there is small doubt that this historian was wrong about the brick church in its final site on the east side of the creek.

Another diarist, Philip Vickers Fithian, describes Port Tobacco at some length about this time, but his account is none too rosy. He was on his way home to New Jersey from Nomini Hall on the Virginia side of the Potomac and says there was

10. *Archives of Maryland*, LVI, index: Organ.

11. *Inventory of Church Archives in the District of Columbia*. (Washington, 1940), p. 123.

some epidemic raging in town, of which many had died. He was kept awake, he says, by slamming shutters at Mrs. Halkinson's Inn. He thought the houses were mostly one story buildings. We know from other records that this was not the case. Fithian was probably tired. He had a long journey ahead of him, we know that he was in love at the time, so he may have been able to see no good in anything which kept him from his destination. In fact, Port Tobacco at the close of the Revolution was absorbing sophistication like a sponge. Far from the scenes of battle, there were often young French and Continental officers in town.

A significant letter showing the social life of the time is owned by the Mitchell family of Hanson Hill, Charles County, a copy of which is preserved in the Maryland Historical Society. It is from James Craik, Jr. (probably a son of Dr. James Craik, surgeon general of the Continental Army), to his friend Walter Stone of the "Financier's Office," Philadelphia:

Strawberry hill July 2, 1782

My dear Friend:

Since my Last nothing but Mirth and Gaiety has attracted the attention of the Polite Circle of Porttobacco, having Diverted themselves of their former ceremony now suffer Friendship and Familiarity to reign with Propet Energy which I'll assure you renders it the most agreeable Circle I know Philad^a not excepted we have had a great Ball at the Widow Furry's about a Fortnight ago, which consisted of thirty-two Ladies and six Gentlemen a very great Disproportion, the Mortification of the poor Little Girls exceeded anything I ever saw, they could scarcely reconcile Dancing with each other, notwithstanding their propensity to that amusement, there was none of our family there except Miss Ewell, the old woman was greatly disappointed as she prepared a supper for twice the number. I have just returned from Virginia where I spent the Last Week very agreeably as we had a great race at Coalchester on Thursday and an Elegant Ball in the Evening (Given by our Friend Greason) where I had the pleasure of seeing the Beautiful Miss Blackburn & Miss Scott with all the Dumfreice Belles—we have had no marriages since I came home nor any prospect of any except Mr. Redgates & Miss Betsy King which I think will come to pass very soon, the Little alderman during her illness regularly paid her a visit every morning & Evening to comfort her & advise her to bear it with Christian fortitude— poor Watt H.—is very industriously seeking for a companion but finds one very difficult to be met with, though he says he is determined to have one against the fall—I am sorry to inform you that Miss Lee has been confined to her room these two weeks past with Sore Eyes a Disease which has been Epedemical here since my arrival here—I have not had the pleasure of seeing your Brother Michael yet as he has been at the Assembly ever since I left you tho I expect to see him this

week as he just come home, your Sister was here a few Days since in perfect health & very Lovely if you have not yet Purchased the Cloth for my Coat I will be obliged to you not to get it of this Color as I have one like it already & if you cannot purchase the Tambored Jacket & B—— you may get me enough of any pretty silk for a pattern & send it by the first opportunity tho I should prefer the former if cheap, let the cloth be of light colour—pray write me by the next post as I am very impatient to hear from you tell Mifflin I shall write him by the next post, inform me where Billy is as I have not yet heard from him give my Comp^s to Miss Bond, Delany & Miller & all my acquaintances & I am w^t usual esteem your affec. Friend James Craik jun^r

PS Dolly Desires me not to forget to present her Love to you & is impatient to see you once more at Porttobacco.

[Endorsed:] Dr. James Craik, Junr

July 2d 1782 Rec'd & answered July 9th, 1782

Parties like the “great ball at the widow Furry’s” were not unusual for the town made much of its inns, and from very early times there is record of entertaining in these public places. Not that hospitality was less in private homes, but the townspeople were friendly and eager for association with the passing stranger; and many worth while persons were to be met in the hostelries. It was an interesting day in town when George Washington dined at the Inn on “baked sheep’s head, right out of the river,” or John Randolph of Roanoke, followed by his hunting hounds, strode the streets, protesting the second war with England. There was no telling where a celebrity might descend from the stage coach coming in from Annapolis over the Post Road and the town turned out at its noisy approach.

Writing of a tour of the United States, J. F. D. Smith¹² says that the site of St. Thomas’ Manor, “just by Port Tobacco is the most beautiful place and the most elegant situation in the world” and though this is extreme praise, the Port Tobacco valley was and still is always a delight to English visitors, no doubt because it looks so like the English countryside. In 1784 it likely was very beautiful. On the hill at the south of the town is “Chandler’s Hope,” the home of William and Ann Neal; the house still stands, as does “Rose Hill” to the west. Built by Dr. Gustavus Richard Brown, son of the first Dr. Gustavus Brown of “Rich Hill,” “Rose Hill” is of brick overlaid with weatherboarding and has great chimneys at either end overlooking an elaborate boxwood garden.

Dr. Brown, beside being a judge and legislator, was a distinguished physician and his dissecting room in the basement, at “Rose Hill,” where he worked with a few medical students, was a mysterious region sending forth tall tales to chill the spines

12. *A Tour of the United States of America* (London, 1784), II, 180.

of local gossips. In the *Maryland Gazette* of September 17, 1789, appears this notice:

A young gentleman inclined to study medicine, and qualified for the purpose, will be received on reasonable terms by Dr. Gustavus Brown Port Tobacco

He was a friend and frequent visitor at Mount Vernon, and, with Dr. Craik of LaGrange, was called to Washington's bedside the night that he died. Dr. Dick of Alexandria, was also in consultation and advised against bleeding, but Dr. Craik, prone to use the lancet freely, had overruled Dr. Dick, and when Dr. Brown reached the bedside, Washington had been bled. After Washington died Dr. Brown wrote to Dr. Craik that he was now convinced that Dr. Dick was right and had his judgment been taken Washington might have been saved.¹³

To the south of "Rose Hill" was the home of John Hanson, "Mulberry Grove," less pretentious—its distinguished owner was a quiet man. He is called sometimes the first president of the United States, a title none too valid; he was president of the last Continental Congress and one of the earliest organizers of the machinery set up for American freedom.

With the 19th century the town settled in its final place on the east side of the creek and began to take an orderly pattern which was to attain its point of highest development as a local social and political center. Inns and ordinaries gave way to hotels; the St. Charles boasted 25 large bedrooms with dining room seating 200 people, breakfast room, card room, double parlors, kitchen and proprietor's suite with living and bed rooms and servants' quarters. Surrounded by great aspens, it lent dignity to the town square. Throughout the town stood homes solid and comfortable, their paneled rooms furnished with mahogany and black walnut. Lilies and roses from the gardens nodded in their Sèvres vases, over the five o'clock tea tables. Afternoon tea was a ceremony in Port Tobacco, and when the days grew busier in the lean years after the war, the ceremony was extended to the early supper. Even today Charles Countians may ask a guest to "tea" when they mean the last meal of the day.

Dinner was in the early afternoon, and many New Orleans dishes were favorites on the Port Tobacco tables. Two of the most popular of these were the rolled French omelet and stuffed ham. These dishes may have been introduced by some Gullah cook from down the coast. At all events they took fast hold of the Charles County appetite. Stuffed ham, an Easter treat, is ignored in Baltimore and nearly unknown farther north, but for the Charles Countian it is a sorry Easter table where the red and green dish is not.¹⁴

13. John T. Howard, "The Doctors Gustavus Brown," in *Annals of Medical History*, n.s., 9: 446 (Sept. 1937).

14. The ham is set to boil while a peck or so of greens, usually land cress and kale or tender

Cool springs in the hills to the east furnished the town with water, piped into hydrants. A curious item appears in an issue of the *Maryland Gazette* of 1850 which says: "Port Tobacco is celebrated for its cold waters of Mt. Misery." What Mt. Misery was not now known.

In 1848 Port Tobacco printed its first weekly newspaper, *The Port Tobacco Times and Charles County Advertiser*. Elijah Wells, Jr., was its publisher and printer. It remained a local institution as *The Port Tobacco Times* until it was absorbed in 1898 by *The Times-Crescent*, a step which signalized the fall of Port Tobacco and the rise of La Plata.

On November 14th and 15th, 1848, the first Agricultural Fair of the Charles County Agricultural Society was held at Port Tobacco. The farmers exhibited their stock and their crops, vegetables and fruits, the housewives their butter, bread, homemade soap, quilts and handwoven cloth. Mr. Charles H. Drury of Baltimore exhibited a horse-power thrasher and other farm implements. The Hon. John G. Chapman made an address on the occasion, a copy of which, in booklet form, provides a fund of early agricultural data, as well as being a rare Port Tobacco imprint. At that time the lighter vehicles such as the carriage and the buggy, were not in general use by the country people. The great coaches were decaying in the stable buildings and most of the local travel was done on horse-back, and the horse was a particular feature of these two autumn days of the first Charles County Fair. The committee reported the premium for the best saddle horse "was well contested for by Mr. George Dent and Mr. Charles A. Pye, but John Logan's pretensions were such that your committee could not overlook." The best mare for general purpose was a close tie between Mr. John Hamilton's "Queen of Clubs" and Col. William Thompson's "Lilly," but Mr. Marion Wallace's nag, not named, carried off the prize.

Letters of that time complain of the high prices in Port Tobacco. One housewife must send to Alexandria for paint to re-do her chairs, "as it is so high here at home," and a Baltimore visitor was clamorous because he had to pay 35 cents for a hair cut when he only paid 25 cents in the barber shops in Baltimore. Port Tobacco was never a manufacturing town like those in other counties, but had a vigorous retail trade with many stores for its size. When the ships no longer brought the goods straight from England, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Alexandria became the markets, and merchandise came down over the waterways until after the middle of the 19th century when the Pennsylvania Railroad built its line to the Potomac.

When the Civil War came on and Maryland stayed within the Union, Port

young cabbage sprouts, with a touch of green garlic leaves, is chopped fine, and sprinkled with salt and pepper. When the ham is half done it is taken up and the chopped green is wilted in the boiling ham water, then squeezed tightly together and stuffed into incisions cut knife-wide to the bone of the half done ham, which is now put into a cotton bag and back in the boiler to finish cooking. When cold, the slices are striped in a red and green delight.

Tobacco, with all Charles County, was solidly behind General Lee. Details from both armies were occasionally encamped within a few miles of one another, sometimes on the same farm. When the Union drafted the planters the latter paid for substitutes. Those who did not cross the river and join Lee's army went on pulling for the Confederacy.

The town enjoyed its intrigues, and up at "Rose Hill" grave doings went on. The Brown family had long passed away, and "Rose Hill" had come into possession of the Floyds, through their kinsman, Ignatius Semmes. Young Bob Floyd was with Lee's army, and Mrs. Floyd and Olivia (a black-eyed live-wire) were obliged to entertain Union officers who were billeted in the house and grounds. The young Olivia was in constant communication with the Army of Northern Virginia and many a night after the household was asleep she crept out in the dark, saddled her horse and galloped the rough miles to Laidler's Ferry with information or papers that must get through by blinker signal to Hooe's across the river. Back home by dawn, she was ready to amuse the distinguished northern "guests" at breakfast in the big dining room where her mother presided.

Rose Hill had a ghost, a huge blue dog, which was supposed to guard a cache of gold hidden on the side of the hill when his peddler master was murdered one dark night of uncertain date. In her old age Miss Olivia liked to tell how the Negroes saw the dog come over the hill in a thundering cloud of smoke the day that Bob was killed. The bullet that killed Bob remained on the drawing room mantel, a grim souvenir, and the blue dog story is still alive today.

The girls of the town knitted and sewed and smuggled food to their men whenever they could, through the long four years until defeat was a stark certainty. Then on the morning of April 15, 1865, as the sun came over the hills, a detachment of soldiers from Hooper's Division marched into town with the news that President Lincoln had been shot the night before and the assassin had crossed the Anacostia bridge heading for Southern Maryland. The town gasped. Only the night before at a local dance, a youth with too much to drink had boasted that "Abe Lincoln will be dead in the morning." There was doubtless nothing actually known of the tragedy but as the days went by and the soldiers searched the strange countryside, the neighing of Booth's horses in the nearby woods sounded a warning in every local ear.

The tragic excitement died down and Port Tobacco settled to the business of reconstruction. Prices in the stores which had been higher than in Baltimore and Alexandria now soared to heights unthinkable. Cotton and wool were hard to come by for the home weaver and calico was higher than silk had been formerly, sugar was 25 cents a pound; and the planter was sick with dismay when he must go into town to buy meat for his table. He, the country squire, whose fields and flocks had amply fed the slaves, the large family, the constant guest, must now go shopping for food like any poor white. He was no longer a self-supporting entity, his

own hands must now provide him with a living. But most of them faced about with courage. The returned soldier gayly joked about starting life over with one old mule, the girls cooked and sewed and gathered about the square piano in the evening to sing sentimental ballads.

A modern novelist laid a scene in Port Tobacco and had her characters walk in the Duke of Gloucester St. and others of high sounding names. This was "bad properties" for old Port Tobacco, for the town was never pretentious. The streets were Causeway Road, Valley Road, High Street, Main Street, Marsh Road, Old Post Road and such serviceable names. The town square held the lovely old Christ Church, the brick Court House, the St. Charles and the Centennial hotels, a number of lesser buildings, and in a triangular space made by the intersection of Main Street and Marsh Road, the town hydrant. Lawyer's offices, newspaper offices and some stores faced the square. Some of the inns were pine paneled and the madeira and porter which passed over their polished counters enlivened a wit to match the best. Good talk was a cherished thing in Port Tobacco and many a local Dr. Johnson is still quoted in families with a background from those days.

Court days were special times. All the countryside came to town, the hotel dining rooms were filled, and for many years after the war, out on the square "Aunt Nancy Higdon" served farm dinners, fancy cakes, and buttermilk to the crowd in the streets. She cooked the food at home up in the "forest," took it to town in huge baskets where it was served with immaculate care from improvised trestle tables set up on the green for "Cote days."

Late in the century politics began to threaten the foundations of the old town. La Plata, three miles inland, was growing up and wanted the county seat. Its removal became a political issue with much bitterness attendant. Finally in 1892, the records were removed and one night the court house took fire and burned. Those opposed to the removal rent their garments and called names; but the court house was gone. Where would it be rebuilt? Feeling ran so high that the town itself was out of the question. As a compromise Chapel Point was agreed upon as the lesser of the evils. An election was called in June, 1895. La Plata won by a large majority and to the new village the court house went. Old Christ Church was taken down stone by stone and rebuilt in La Plata not far from the new court house. Business followed the court and residents followed business; the old houses came down one by one until now the streets and squares are corn and tobacco fields. The Dr. Neal house is preserved as the home of Mr. George Wade, a descendant of the first Zachary Wade. The old Padgett house and one other that has been recently restored by Mrs. Alice Ferguson, are all that remain of the original town. The little Baptist chapel was constructed in later years from a wing of the old court house. Even the old hydrants are gone and an artesian well gushes water for the thirsty traveler who comes to visit this deserted village where always it seems to be Sunday afternoon.

Comment

As Maryland continues to experience unprecedented growth, it is easy for people to forget the remarkable history that has occurred around them. This article provides a view of one lost town that had a significant place in Maryland's past. From the early Jesuit mission of Father Andrew White and the seventeenth-century court house of Charles County to visits by George Washington and the impact of the Civil War, Port Tobacco was witness to an unusually broad swath of history. The author correctly notes that the name derives from the Potobaco Indians, an Algonquin group of importance in early Maryland.

Port Tobacco's development reflected the slow growth of towns in the Chesapeake, and the 1697 surveyor's plat of its courthouse, stocks, inn, and houses is the only detailed illustration of a seventeenth-century Maryland landscape that survives. Written in a style contemporary historians would not employ, this article offers an enjoyable personal view of a place the author knew well. In describing the history, buildings, and legends of Port Tobacco, Hayden created a narrative of a town that has nearly vanished, combining documents, observations, and unique local lore in a way that few people could duplicate today. Rereading this piece renews our appreciation for the importance of Port Tobacco, and helps make us aware of the unsuspected depths of history that may be found along the by-ways of Maryland.

HENRY M. MILLER
Historic St. Mary's City

Practicing Medicine at the Baltimore Almshouse, 1828–1850

KATHERINE A. HARVEY

The Baltimore Almshouse was established in 1773 to care for the poor, and especially for those poor who were incapacitated by illness, old age, physical handicap, mental deficiency, or insanity. To this end, the law provided that part of the money appropriated to maintain the poor should be used to pay a doctor for his salary and medicines.¹ That the institution fulfilled its purpose may be seen from the trustees' estimate that the almshouse population for the year ending April 30, 1826, had been made up of "one-fourth sick, . . . and nearly a fourth aged and infirm, or maimed, and incapable of labor."² Except during epidemics, when the city set up temporary hospitals to receive persons stricken by yellow fever, cholera, typhoid, or typhus, the almshouse infirmary was in fact the only refuge for those who could not afford private medical care.

Between 1822 and 1866 that refuge was provided in a large stone and brick building at Calverton, about two miles west of the city. The impressive central block, originally a private dwelling, contained the trustees' meeting room, and quarters for the overseer and his family, the resident medical students, and the apothecary. Two wings, added after purchase of the estate, contained dormitories and hospital wards, including "an infirmary for the indigent sick," a lying-in hospital, and a "lunatic hospital."³

The medical department of the almshouse was supervised by an "attending physician" appointed by the trustees of the poor. By 1835 the doctor's annual salary had risen to \$700, for the first time equaling that of the overseer.⁴ The trustees' bylaws required the physician to go out from the city at least once a day to make the rounds of the wards and advise the medical students. Until 1835 literal compliance with this bylaw was not strictly enforced. In one instance, for example, because of his illness the physician was away from the institution for a period of two weeks.⁵ The appointment for 1835 was made with the understanding that the daily visits would be carried out,⁶ and in 1837 the trustees further required:

Whenever the attending physician is unable from indisposition or any other cause, daily to attend the House, he shall furnish a substitute of equal medi-

This article first appeared in volume 74 (1979). The author of several articles and books about Maryland's history, Mrs. Harvey also edited The Lonaconing Journals (Philadelphia, 1977).

cal reputation and experience to supply his place, and if prevented more than one day at a time, he shall inform the Board thereof through the President by letter, and stating the name of the individual he has selected.⁷

With the attending physician acting as mentor, a group of resident students carried on the day-to-day care of the patients. The students were usually graduates of medicine, who applied for appointment to the institution "on account of the advantages which it affords for the completion of their medical education." In 1835 each of the six residents paid \$225 per annum, which covered the cost of board with the overseer's family.⁸ The trustees did not insist on the medical degree, and occasionally appointed students who were still attending the lectures at the University of Maryland medical school. However, they did specify that "No resident student shall be competent to act as Senior Student while attending the medical lectures."⁹ This was an important provision of the bylaws, because the senior student was in charge of prescribing all medicines.¹⁰ Students were expected to furnish their own transportation to the lectures, and in at least one instance were permitted to keep a horse and carriage at the almshouse, paying \$6 a month for the privilege.¹¹ In most cases resident students were appointed for a term of one year and could apply for reappointment. A third-year resident did not have to pay board.¹²

During the first ten years of the period under consideration, the trustees appointed as attending physicians middle-aged men of varied experience and education who were well established and respected in the Baltimore medical community. Thomas H. Wright (birth date not known), attending physician from 1828 to 1833, was a surgeon's mate in the War of 1812, received an honorary medical degree from the University of Maryland in 1819, and earned an M.D. from the College of Physicians and Surgeons at New York in 1823. He was considered "a physician of high local standing [and] an able practitioner." His published articles, based on his experiences at the almshouse, are a valuable contribution to institutional practices of his era.¹³

James H. Miller, Wright's immediate successor (1833–1837), was born in Pennsylvania in 1788 and received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1810. In 1825 he moved to Baltimore, where he became one of the founders of the Washington Medical College and professor of the practice of medicine at that institution from 1827–1832. For part of the time that he served at the almshouse, he was also professor of anatomy and physiology at the medical college.¹⁴

William W. Handy, who followed Miller and served for only one year,¹⁵ was born on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in 1785 and received his medical degree from Maryland Medical College in 1807. Like Miller, he was one of the founders of Washington Medical College and there occupied the chair of obstetrics and the diseases of women and children (1827–1842).¹⁶

By 1838 it was obvious that one doctor, traveling to and from the almshouse on horseback or by carriage, and then visiting from 100 to 200 patients, would have little or no time for university teaching or private practice.¹⁷ It was perhaps for this reason that the trustees decided to appoint two attending physicians, who would divide equally the responsibilities and the salary—still \$700 a year. They named as “Senior Attending Physician” Samuel Annan, a Philadelphian born in 1797, who had received his medical degree at Edinburgh in 1820 and had assisted at Guy’s and St. Thomas’ hospitals in London before returning to the United States. Prior to his appointment as almshouse physician, he had helped found the Washington Medical College and had been professor of anatomy and physiology there from 1827 to 1834.¹⁸

Annan was appointed “in conjunction with Doct William Power,”¹⁹ a former student who had taken his medical degree at the University of Maryland in 1835. Power, twenty-five years old, had recently returned from Paris, where he had continued his medical studies.²⁰ He was the first of the almshouse students to receive an appointment as attending physician.

The architecture of the almshouse dictated the division of hospital duties: one doctor and half of the students formed a team which took care of patients in the west, or female, wing; the other, with the remainder of the students, attended to cases in the east, or male, wing. After six months on one service, the teams changed places.²¹

Under the new arrangements, there need be no more climbing from cellar to attic in one wing, and then descending to cross through the central building and repeat the whole process on the other side. Physicians treating the men would cover the second-floor hospital and surgical ward, and the basement cells which housed the “more refractory class of maniacs” and intractable inebriates. The women’s doctors would visit the combined medical and surgical hospitals, a separate hospital for free black women, the lying-in ward, and a room for syphilitic patients—all on the second floor of the west wing. A “chronic hospital for aged colored women” was set up in the attic. As in the men’s department, the basement contained cells for the violent insane and for alcoholics needing restraint.

By 1849 the infirmary had overflowed into two new buildings in the almshouse yard. One of these, on two floors, contained medical and surgical wards for free black males. The other, a four-story stone structure, provided more accommodation for the insane—the “new” cells, upper and lower; the children’s room for newly-delivered mothers and their children, and for foundlings and nurses; and a “chronic hospital” for aged white females.²²

It should be noted that the almshouse admitted free blacks, many of whom lived in Baltimore in extreme poverty. It was taken for granted that white and colored would be kept apart, and much of the trustees’ early construction program was devoted to achieving segregation, especially in the infirmary. Separate did not necessarily mean equal: in 1841, before the completion of the new building

in the yard, the hospital for colored men occupied the upper floor of the former coal house.²³

The owners of slaves were not allowed to send them to the almshouse for treatment at public expense. Even an application by one of the prominent physicians of the city failed to gain consent for the admission of "a female slave . . . subject to hysterical fits."²⁴ Perhaps the trustees assumed that slaveholders would be willing to pay the \$3 weekly fee at the Baltimore Infirmary, the hospital for the university medical school, which did admit slaves.²⁵

Between April 30, 1832, and December 31, 1841, the almshouse doctors handled over 16,500 medical and surgical cases. The ailments diagnosed (more than 350) ranged alphabetically from abortion to zona (shingles), and included most of the illnesses, injuries and imperfections of body and mind recognized by nineteenth-century medical science.²⁶ The student who wrote, on settling in at the almshouse, "I shall probably see almost every variety of disease which this climate & season present," was sure to have his expectations realized or surpassed.²⁷ Even exotic diseases turned up at the infirmary in this seaport city with its thriving Caribbean trade. In 1834, for instance, cases of elephantiasis, yaws, and leprosy were reported in the annual hospital summary.

However, there was nothing exotic about the general run of maladies, which encompassed "all the forms of inveterate disease, usually attendant on a life of intemperance and profligacy."²⁸ Prominent among these were fevers, catarrh, dysentery, pneumonia, phthisis, rheumatism, ophthalmia, skin diseases, gonorrhea, syphilis, and drunkenness, politely termed "temulentia." Some of these diseases were considered seasonal. Dr. Annan observed that ophthalmia began to appear in the women's and children's wards early in May "when the change was making from winter to summer clothing," and continued "until finally banished by the warm weather of June."²⁹ Other diseases were not only seasonal, but also tended to originate in certain localities. Every autumn, laborers on the railroads and canals being constructed near Baltimore, and workers in the iron ore mines along the Philadelphia and Washington roads, came to the almshouse to be treated for malarial fevers.³⁰ In 1849, out of "a little upward of 2000 cases of all diseases treated," one-tenth (208) of the patients suffered from the various forms of these fevers.³¹

As if these native ailments were not enough, Asiatic cholera swept over western Europe and crossed the Atlantic in 1832. The death toll at the Baltimore almshouse was 133.³² A similar scourge claimed 86 victims in 1849.³³ In 1847 typhus was brought to Baltimore by immigrants aboard the ship *Rio Grande*.³⁴ We have no record of the mortality at the almshouse during that year, but we do know that the trustees requested an additional \$5,000 to deal with the large number of pauper immigrants.³⁵ In the winter of 1850–51, typhus, carried by a passenger on the ship *Scotia*, killed 22 almshouse inmates and six of the nurses who attended them.³⁶

Almshouse patients lacked the capacity to resist even common diseases, and

required protracted treatment. Some were worn down by abuse of "ardent spirits," some by exposure to extremes of weather, some by malnutrition. Many of them came to the hospital only after they had been ill for some time and their condition was considered "desperate." Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that one attending physician commented, "In medicine, as in other things, it may happen that our success is not equal to our efforts."³⁷ The writings of the doctors themselves testify to the unflagging zeal of those efforts, as they bled, blistered, and prescribed medicines according to the generally accepted practices of their time.

Blood-letting was widely employed as a means of reducing fevers, calming a racing pulse, easing breathing, or relieving congestion.³⁸ It was accomplished in three ways: by venesection, by cupping, or by the application of leeches. Venesection, which involved opening a vein, was used for abstracting fairly large amounts of blood—up to 22 or 24 ounces in some recorded almshouse cases.³⁹ It was the custom at the Baltimore almshouse to give each student a new lancet at the beginning of his residency, and there is ample evidence that these instruments were diligently employed in the treatment of a great variety of illnesses, either at the student's own initiative or at the direction of the attending physician.⁴⁰

If, as was often the case at the almshouse, the patient's condition was so poor that venesection was inadvisable,⁴¹ the physician resorted to cupping for drawing smaller amounts of blood to relieve local inflammation. The operator slashed the skin with a "scarificator" and then applied a heated cupping glass, which in cooling sucked out the prescribed amount of blood from the "principal seat of sensibility," i.e., that part of the body which seemed to be the center of distress. Thus cups were placed over the temples in cases of delirium tremens, over the abdomen for "biliary fever" or dysentery, over the chest for catarrh, over the stomach for gastritis, over the affected joint for rheumatism, and so on.⁴² Cupping glasses, which came in various sizes, were usually applied in groups of four to eight.⁴³ The inventory for 1838 shows that the hospital had two sets of cupping instruments.⁴⁴

Leeches were a perfectly acceptable alternative to cupping, and their bites were probably less painful than the cuts of the scarificator. Each of these little creatures could absorb about a teaspoonful of blood before becoming sated and dropping off its host. There was, however, some difficulty in getting leeches to take hold, especially in cold weather, and in at least two instances at the almshouse, their slothfulness led to their being abandoned in favor of cups.⁴⁵ When the leeches were cooperative, they were employed to seemingly good effect. We know that they were used in the lying-in ward, and in the treatment of rheumatism and ophthalmia, and we have one account of a massive application of 40 leeches to the abdomen of a post-operative patient.⁴⁶ It is a rather interesting sidelight that imported English leeches were considered best, but the almshouse trustees permitted their use only "in what are regarded as extreme cases." Consequently, in

1838 we find Dr. Annan and his colleagues making do with the American variety "got out of a neighboring brook."⁴⁷

If blood was not to be drawn, it could at least be lured away from an inflamed and congested joint or organ by applying a blister to the skin in the neighborhood of the affected part. Blistering plasters were compounded of various irritating substances mixed with lard and resins and spread on cloth. The most common agent was the Spanish fly (cantharides), but vesicles could also be produced by mustard, turpentine, and pitch from the Norway spruce. Once formed, the blisters were opened and kept open and irritated to allow a continuous discharge of fluid. The salutary effect of this practice was thought to depend on diverting circulation from the affected organs and directing it to the blistered surface.⁴⁸

The prescription book kept for the first ten months of 1848 (see note 21) shows that the two attending physicians and the eight resident students at the almshouse ordered three applications of leeches, 13 venesects, 67 cuppings, and 220 blisterings. In addition, they wrote almost 4,300 prescriptions for medicines. An apothecary, who was a full-time member of the resident staff, presided over an array of animal, vegetable, and mineral products which he dispensed as directed. From the plant world the 1848 prescription book calls for common materials like chamomile, peppermint, burdock, horseradish, wormwood, nightshade, goosefoot, wintergreen, snakeroot, foxglove, boneset, oak bark and galls, gentian, hops, henbane, juniper, lobelia, wild marjoram, parsley, rhubarb, bloodroot, Jimson weed, dandelion, slippery elm, valerian, and white hellebore. Many items were obtained from abroad: gum Arabic from Egypt; aloes, asafoetida, camphor, and cardamom from the East Indies; flowers of Benjamin from Sumatra; buchu from southern Africa; cascarilla from the Bahamas; copaiba, jalap, cinchona bark, and the balsams of Tolu and of Peru from South America; gamboge from Siam and Ceylon; licorice root from southern Europe; guaiacum and quassia from the West Indies; krameria from Java; manna from Sicily; myrrh from Arabia; and scammony from Syria.

Medicinal contributions from the animal world were fewer: lard and whale oil (spermaceti) for ointments; ox bile; musk; spider webs;⁴⁹ cantharides (the pulverized beetles used internally as well as in blisters); egg yolks; and codliver oil.

In the realm of inorganic materials, almshouse physicians relied most heavily on preparations of mercury and of antimony. The prescriptions do, however, specify many other chemical substances, among them alum, chalk, cream of tartar, copper sulphate, lunar caustic, Epsom salts, sugar of lead, arsenic, bicarbonate of soda, sulphur, salts of iron, zinc, potassium, and sodium, and prussic, hydrochloric, nitric, and sulphuric acids.

The apothecary's stock was designed to treat the whole man. From it he could prepare washes, liniments, and both caustic and soothing ointments. He could put together materials to be gargled or to be injected as enemas or douches. Liq-

uids to be taken by mouth might take the form of infusions, mixtures, tinctures, solutions, elixirs, extracts, draughts, decoctions, or syrups. The apothecary rolled his own pills and mixed his own powders. Some of these medicines were indeed disagreeable, but the almshouse doctors made no concession to taste. Gelatin capsules had been invented, but are not once mentioned in the prescription book.

Between 1833 and 1841, the trustees spent a little over \$750 a year for "medicines."⁵⁰ This amount did not include expenditures for such pharmaceutical materials as flaxseed, hops, charcoal, red oak bark, logwood, and all of the spices which were used medicinally. Because all supplies were purchased for the establishment as a whole, and there are no separate accounts for the hospital, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to determine accurately the total amount spent for patient care, including diet. We know that all wines and ardent spirits were bought solely for hospital use. We can identify many of the articles "ordered by the attending physician as 'hospital stores' for use of the sick":⁵¹ wooden legs, spectacles, "gloves for maniacs," trusses, syringes, catheters, medicine mugs, cotton balls, and linen rags (for making lint). But there is no record, for example, of the amounts of food allotted to almshouse and hospital kitchens, respectively.

The attending physicians tried to keep costs down by refraining from ordering expensive drugs and confining themselves to the most necessary medicines.⁵² The trustees tightened control over the medical department by limiting the requisition power to the senior physician, and by asking him to appear at board meetings to justify his proposed spending. They also appointed a committee to look into the cost of medical supplies.⁵³ For the most part, the board seems to have been ready to allow any reasonable outlay, in 1834 even permitting the purchase of "Philosophical Apparatus to enable us to make & record meteorological observations," since these might have a bearing on the state of health at the almshouse.⁵⁴

Attempts to economize apparently did not extend to the food and drink which the doctors considered necessary to restore the health of those under their care. The 1848 prescription book shows that the almshouse physicians wrote 1,550 orders for diet, ranging from barley water and beef tea to broiled mutton, and including fish, chicken, vegetables, and a good deal of rice, cornmeal mush, and molasses. Daily allowances of six to eight ounces of wine or a bottle of porter for some debilitated patients were not uncommon. However, the maximum purchase of wine recorded in the minutes was only 93 gallons in 1840.⁵⁵ The diet of the various hospitals was "wholly at the discretion of the medical attendants," who may also have suggested the types of food to be provided for the rest of the inmates.⁵⁶ Certainly during the cholera epidemic of 1849, the regulation of diet for the entire almshouse population was put in the hands of the physicians.⁵⁷ Foods which were coarse and difficult to digest were thought to favor the development of cholera. Hence, during this emergency, boiled cabbage and soups heavy with vegetables, which had been "prominent articles at dinner," no longer appeared on

the table. Working hands ate fresh meat with rice, potatoes, and bread at their main meal of the day, and bread with strong tea or coffee at breakfast and supper. The baker was ordered to add to the bread, as an aid to digestion, "a quantity of sulphate of alumina, sufficient to give to each adult, at every meal, about five grains." And as a final precaution, "every man without exception being accustomed to exhilarating [sic] potations out of the house was allowed each day a wineglassfull of whiskey."⁵⁸ In ordinary times ardent spirits were denied to all but the very ill.

What may have seemed an undue emphasis on medical procedures, medications, and diet, serves to point out the relatively minor roles of surgery and obstetrics at the almshouse during this period. The infirmary's large surgical ward, holding 60 to 80 beds, was devoted entirely to "the class of diseases and injuries denominated surgical; wounds, fractures, [leg] ulcers, &c."⁵⁹ Nursing in all wards was done by men and women selected from among the inmates of the institution. They were not paid, and often served reluctantly.⁶⁰ To attend to the special needs of patients in the surgical ward, the trustees provided for the employment of an experienced dresser, a hospital assistant whose duty it was to clean and dress wounds and ulcers, applying the remedies which the physicians prescribed.⁶¹ These included a variety of washes, unguents, and poultices. Under normal circumstances, basilicon ointment with oil of turpentine was the most common prescription for both ulcers and wounds, together with Castile soap for cleansing. Poultices were made of flaxseed, carrots, hops, yeast, or chopped rye, sometimes mixed or dusted with powdered charcoal or cinchona bark. Sometimes the attendant painted a leg with iodine, or touched a sore with silver nitrate. Venereal ulcers were treated with mercurial ointments.⁶²

The surgical ward was usually full, but, as one student put it, "the cases there are not generally of a character to be very interesting or instructing & we are glad when the attending physician thinks an amputation necessary."⁶³ As it happens, the year in which the student wrote this is the only one for which we have a listing of surgical operations at the almshouse. Between May 1, 1834, and April 30, 1835, the attending and resident staff operated on 104 of the 2,571 patients admitted to the hospital. Only seven cases involved anything as dramatic as amputation. Among the remainder, ten were for removal of hemorrhoids, and ten for circumcision. Fifteen persons were tapped for dropsy. Some small tumors and some bony excrescences were excised. There were six operations for cataract, and one for harelip.⁶⁴

In 1833 the supply of surgical instruments at the almshouse consisted of one case of amputating instruments, one case of obstetrical instruments (purchased for \$15 in February of that year), incomplete sets of tooth and eye instruments, two scarificators, and miscellaneous equipment including catheters, syringes, and a tourniquet.⁶⁵ By 1835, thanks to the expenditure of \$220 over two years, the list had grown sufficiently to make possible the operations detailed above. For ex-

ample, the surgeon now had harelip forceps at his disposal.⁶⁶ The inventory of 1838 contains an interesting item: "1 set acupuncturing instruments."⁶⁷ There is, however, no record of any practice of acupuncture at the Baltimore almshouse.

Surgery was performed without benefit of general anaesthesia. Information about the use of ether and chloroform was not widely disseminated until the late 1840s, and up to that time, all that a surgeon could do was to order a "large anodyne" (usually laudanum) for his patient before operating.⁶⁸ After operating, he or the attending physician had to assure that his patient was comfortable by prescribing the necessary narcotics. Following an amputation at the almshouse in 1848, the doctor prescribed opium for a number of days to be taken "at any time when great pain or restlessness comes on." This patient, a black woman, survived, was given a "flannel cap for amputated leg," in preparation for fitting a wooden or cork substitute for the missing limb, and was discharged from the hospital two and a half months after the operation.⁶⁹

In comparison with the other departments of the hospital, the lying-in ward did little business. In this time period, most babies were born at home. During the nine and a half years for which we have statistics, fewer than 250 women were admitted to this ward, and some of this number came in after abortions or miscarriages. Only 224 infants were delivered, and 25 of these were still-born. Those women who did come to the hospital during these particular years ran a grave risk. Twenty-one of them contracted puerperal fever, and eight died of it. A few years later, in 1844 and 1845, there were so many fatalities from this infection that the lying-in ward was closed for six months.⁷⁰

The unfortunate women who developed "puerperal mania" were consigned to the limbo of the violently insane in the basement cells, where they might remain for many months or even years.⁷¹ The "lunatic department" was an embarrassment to both medical staff and administration. In the absence of any other public facility, the insane poor were sent to the almshouse, where they constituted a body of "nearly all the varied forms of mental disease crowded in unclassified confusion."⁷² In addition, the trustees accepted non-paupers whose relatives or guardians were apparently charged on a basis of ability to pay.⁷³ Those few insane persons who behaved quietly and did not try to run away were employed on the farm or elsewhere in the establishment, or were allowed to exercise in the small yard provided for their use in 1841.⁷⁴ The others, "furious, violent and ungovernable" or constantly trying to escape, were kept locked up in their underground rooms, sometimes three or more in each eight by ten foot cubicle. The most intractable were further restrained by chains, hand and foot shackles, strait jackets, bed straps, and other devices.⁷⁵ In 1840 the 26 cells had to accommodate not only 76 deranged inmates, but also alcoholics and persons whom city and county authorities had committed as vagrants. Under these conditions it was impossible to provide the "moral treatment, and . . . intellectual discipline judiciously directed by capable

and devoted attendants" thought necessary to supplement "medicinal means" in curing mental illness.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, of the roughly 350 patients reported in a seven-year period, 36 were said to have been "cured" and 70 to have been "relieved."⁷⁷

We know something of the medicinal means which the almshouse doctors employed in treating insanity. Entries in the 1848 prescription book show that they ordered cold shower baths, cups or blisters on the back of the neck, and blisters covering the whole head. The book also indicates that they prescribed purgatives, mercury, and narcotics for this class of patient, all in accordance with the best ideas of treatment at that time.⁷⁸ Naturally, they were responsible, too, for the physical well-being of their charges, and in 1848 (according to the prescription book) treated them for intestinal parasites, ophthalmia, diarrhoea, dysentery, phthisis, rheumatism, and the side effects of mercury.

The cramped quarters for the insane were no more suitable for management of the alcoholics, who made up about ten percent of the hospital cases. The aim in both prolonged intoxication and delirium tremens was to produce uninterrupted sleep, but patients on the way to becoming tranquil were too often "aroused by the noise and tumult of a maniac within hearing."⁷⁹ Opium played a prominent part in the treatment, and the determination of the proper dose was a problem which haunted the almshouse doctors after the sudden and unexpected death of some of their alcoholic patients.⁸⁰ Still, as the prescription book bears witness, in 1848 opium in some form or other was the chief agent for inducing rest. It could take two weeks and a full course of purgatives, emetics, cold showers, and opiates to cure delirium tremens. On the other hand, a run-of-the-mill drunkard might be discharged in a day or two after a large dose of castor oil or Epsom salts and a pint of sedative tea infused from hops.

Perhaps the most interesting development in this field was the change in policy concerning the use of liquor in dealing with alcoholism. After experiments which convinced him it was safe to do so, Dr. Wright, in charge of the hospital from 1828 to 1833, excluded "spirituous drink of all kind" from his plan of treatment, finding it neither necessary nor beneficial.⁸¹ His views prevailed until 1839, when an equally dedicated physician, Alexander C. Robinson, took issue with Wright's assertion that liquor could safely be withheld, pointing out recent deaths at the almshouse apparently caused by lack of enough of the "accustomed stimulus" at least to support life. The controlled use of ardent spirits therefore once again became accepted practice in treating the results of alcohol abuse.⁸² One effect of this change was that purchases of whiskey for the infirmary rose from 35 1/2 gallons in 1839 to 98 1/2 gallons in 1840!⁸³ But by 1848, judging from the handful of cases for which they prescribed brandy or whiskey for delirium tremens and temulentia, almshouse physicians had returned to Wright's way of thinking.

As the preceding brief tour of the infirmary suggests, the resident students at the almshouse saw a large number of patients with a great variety of diseases. They also had the benefit of the institution's expanding medical library, where they could consult standard authorities and keep up with new developments reported in periodical literature.⁸⁴ In addition, as part of their work in the "dead house," they were helping to build up a museum of "many interesting and valuable specimens of anatomy."⁸⁵ One reason why almshouse residencies were so highly prized was that they afforded unusual opportunities for observing and participating in post-mortem examinations. Indeed, one student wrote: "Being so constantly engaged in the study of special and practical anatomy, I have not then attended to the other branches of medical science more than occasion required & under these circumstances you will not be surprised that I am anxious to prolong my stay at this place as long as I possibly can."⁸⁶ Undoubtedly he knew that once in private practice, he would seldom have a chance to perform an autopsy.⁸⁷

Almshouse students could anticipate from 50 to 100 deaths each year from the "necessarily fatal" cases alone—those admitted for confirmed tuberculosis and those classed as "dead or dying when admitted."⁸⁸ The total numbers of dead in each year between 1833 and 1842 ranged from 150 to 300.⁸⁹ Since it was the attending physician who decided whether a post-mortem examination should be conducted, we may assume that the number of such examinations approximated the number of those who died as "subject[s] of public charity in this House."⁹⁰ For some reason, political or otherwise, deaths at the almshouse were not included in the annual reports of the Baltimore Board of Health.⁹¹

One cannot fail to be impressed by the seriousness of most of the medical residents and their willingness to spend extra hours in learning from the living as well as from the dead. The student who was constantly engaged in the dissecting room was matched by the one who spent his spare time "wandering from bed to bed, with stethoscope in hand," studying diseases of the heart and lungs.⁹² Dr. Wright, who seemed to have a special rapport with his young associates, praised them highly for their zeal, compassion, and professional responsibility. There were inevitably a few whose conduct might raise eyebrows. In 1841 two students borrowed the institution's horse and carriage, and drove so fast that the horse was injured. In 1842 one of these same students was suspended from practice at the almshouse for four weeks "for violating the rules of the House," and another student was similarly suspended for "improper conduct." And finally, in 1848 the apothecary complained that Dr. X. had "ordered 1/2 drachm of opium and then burned up the prescription, so as to prevent its being entered upon the medical journal of the house."⁹³ Such incidents were rare. A much more representative situation arose when resident students at the almshouse contracted cholera in 1849, and former students volunteered to fill their places.⁹⁴

Perhaps nowhere is the dedication of the students more clearly demonstrated

than in the treatment of the “necessarily fatal” cases of phthisis (tuberculosis) noted throughout the prescription book. Reluctant to give up, the medical staff bled, blistered, and cupped these patients, and plied them with anodynes, cough remedies, and tonics to the very hour of death. They ordered massage with heated whiskey, salt, and cantharides, and recommended fomentations of brandy and cloves. And they were almost lavish in their suggestions for diet—port wine, arrowroot, sago, milk, soup, broiled meat with potatoes, coffee, chocolate—anything which would tempt a flagging appetite.

It was recognized that “public receptacles of the sick,” such as the almshouse, afforded their medical officers opportunities for experiment which they would not have enjoyed in private practice. For example, the first persons in Baltimore to be vaccinated against smallpox were children at the almshouse,⁹⁵ and it was publication of the results which led to the adoption of the cowpox vaccine by the rest of the Baltimore medical community. In still another instance, in 1848 when anaesthesia was a subject of “supreme interest,” doctors at the almshouse ordered “chloroform to be exhibited & [patient] kept under its influence until the head can be shaved [in preparation for a blister].”⁹⁶ Furthermore, as a committee of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland commented apropos of the large number of cases of malarial fever at the almshouse, “what a field it presents for testing the comparative value of different therapeutic agents.”⁹⁷ Almshouse doctors studied the effects of galvanism, analyzed blood samples from patients with a variety of diseases, and introduced new treatments for delirium tremens, fevers, and gout. One of them expressed the humanitarianism of the age in a plea for special hospitals for the insane. Another came close to recognizing the deadly role of the surgeon who went directly from the dissecting room to the operating theater.⁹⁸

It is important to note that these physicians put in writing their ideas and discoveries and the findings of their post-mortem examinations, and thus made important contributions to the medical literature of the period. For them it was a golden age of publishing, in which they shared their experiences with their colleagues throughout the United States and extended their preceptorial role far beyond the almshouse walls.

Entering the almshouse infirmary did not mean abandoning hope. Eighty-seven patients in every hundred could expect to survive their stay. In spite of the numbers of hopelessly ill, over an eight and a half year period ending in 1841, out of 14,802 admissions only 1,849 (12.5 percent) died while in the hospital.⁹⁹ In general, one must conclude that in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, persons who for economic reasons had to seek admission to the Baltimore almshouse hospital would receive more expert and better-informed treatment than they would get from many outside physicians. They were well fed and well housed. Except for the insane and alcoholic, they were lodged in clean, bright

wards, whitewashed five or six times a year.¹⁰⁰ They were ministered to by men who refused to allow themselves to become "idle spectators of the triumph of disease."¹⁰¹ Only if they could have afforded the fees at the Baltimore Infirmary, the university hospital, would these patients have been attended to by doctors of comparable training and experience, but certainly not of greater compassion and professional zeal.

REFERENCES

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2. Report of the Committee Appointed by the Guardians of the Poor of . . . Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1827), p. 5. Reproduced in *The Almshouse Experience; Collected Reports* (New York, 1971).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 4; and Thomas W. Griffith, *Annals of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1824), p. 238.
4. Minutes of the Poor for Baltimore County and City, April 29, 1835. MS 1866, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland
5. Thomas H. Wright, "Reports of Cases treated in the Baltimore Alms-House Infirmary," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* [hereafter cited AJMS] 3 (1828): 19.
6. Minutes, May 4, 1835.
7. *Ibid.*, May 1, 1837.
8. *Ibid.*, February 4, 1835.
9. *Ibid.*, January 22, 1834.
10. *Ibid.*, May 6, 1833. This same practice was followed at the Philadelphia Almshouse. Samuel Jackson, "Clinical Reports of Cases treated in the Infirmary of the Alms-House of the City and County of Philadelphia," AJMS 1 (1827): 96.
11. Minutes, October 28, 1835.
12. For trustees' action on student appointments, see Minutes 1833-1842, *passim*. Board was raised to \$250 on June 12, 1839, and at the same time the third-year waiver of board was abolished.
13. John R. Quinan, *Medical Annals of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1844), p. 183; Eugene F. Cordell, *Historical Sketch of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, 1807-1890* (Baltimore, 1891), pp. 72-73; and Cordell, *Medical Annals of Maryland* (Baltimore, 1903), p. 633. Douglas Carroll summarizes the Wright articles in "Contributions of Maryland Physicians to Medical Journalism in the U.S.," *Maryland State Medical Journal*, 22 (July 1973):45-48.
14. Cordell, *Medical Annals*, p. 504.
15. Minutes, May 1, 1837.
16. Cordell, *Medical Annals*, p. 427.
17. The patient load is taken from the physicians' annual reports of the number remaining in the infirmary at the end of each fiscal year from 1833-1841. Minutes, May 6, 1833; May 5, 1834; May 4, 1835; May 2, 1836; May 1, 1837; May 7, 1838; May 6, 1839; January 29, 1840; January 13, 1841; January 12, 1842. Actually Wright had supervised 263 cases at one point in 1831. See his "Report to the Trustees on the State of the Medical Department of the Baltimore Alms-House Infirmary, for the year ending the 30th of April, 1831," AJMS 10 (1832): 89.

18. Cordell, *Medical Annals*, p. 304.
19. The Minutes of May 7, 1838, record the appointments of Annan and Power and specify the salaries—\$350 each per annum.
20. Quinan, *Medical Annals*, p. 147; Cordell, *Medical Annals*, p. 538; and obituary in AJMS (n.s.), 25 (1853): 568–70.
21. Physicians' Prescription and Order Book, Baltimore Almshouse (1848), pp. 215, 220. MS 807 (folio), Division of Archives & Manuscripts, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland. Annan's first assignment was to the women's and children's wards. Samuel Annan, "Reports of Cases treated in the Baltimore Alms-House Hospital," AJMS 23 (1838–1839): 329.
22. Thomas H. Buckler, one of the almshouse physicians, described the hospital facilities in his *History of Epidemic Cholera . . . at the Baltimore Alms-House in the Summer of 1849* (Baltimore, 1851), pp. 6–9.
23. Overseer's report, Minutes, January 13, 1841.
24. Minutes, February 20, 1833.
25. Cordell, *Historical Sketch*, p. 46; and William M. Baker, "Baltimore Infirmary: Reports of Surgical Cases," *Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (1840): 187–197.
26. Physicians' summaries of infirmary cases 1832–1842. For references to Minutes, see note 17.
27. Douglas Carroll, "Medical Students 1818 and 1834," *Maryland State Medical Journal* 23 (February, 1974): 40.
28. Wright, "Report to the Trustees," p. 49.
29. Annan, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 23:329.
30. Thomas H. Wright, "On the Use of the Warm Bath in Season Fever," AJMS 6 (1830): 303; W. F. Anderson and Charles Frick, "Notes of Cases of Remittent Fever which occurred in the Baltimore Almshouse Infirmary," AJMS (n.s.), 11 (1846): 312–324; and Buckler, *Epidemic Cholera*, p. 10. Buckler's "Map of the Medical Topography of Baltimore, 1851" shows the mine banks and the "Region of Intermittent & Remittent Fever."
31. "Report of Pathology and Practice of Medicine," *Transactions of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland*, 1856 (Baltimore, 1856): 77.
32. Minutes, May 6, 1833. *Niles' Weekly Register*, Sept. 1, 1832, reported the number of dead as 125.
33. Buckler, *Epidemic Cholera*, p. 17. The *Baltimore American* of August 2, 1849, and the *Sun* of August 10 reported 89 and 94 deaths, respectively.
34. *Baltimore Sun*, May 4, 11 and 12, 1847.
35. *Ibid.*, May 22, 1847.
36. James Wynne, "The Typhus Fever, as it prevailed at the Baltimore Almshouse during the Winter of 1850–51, with Clinical Observations," AJMS (n.s.), 23 (1852): 422–423.
37. Wright, "Report to the Trustees," pp. 48–49; and Jackson, "Clinical Reports," pp. 87–88.
38. Thomas H. Wright, "Contributions to Cardiac Pathology," AJMS 12(1833):36; and William Rothstein, *American Physicians in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: 1972), p. 45.
39. Anderson and Frick, "Notes of Cases," pp. 315, 317.
40. Minutes, May 6, 1833. The extent to which venesection was practiced can best be appreciated by reading the case reports of Wright and Annan published in the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* between 1828 and 1841.
41. See Wright, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 3(1828):19, and 4(1829): 342.
42. Wright, "Report of Cases," AJMS 4 (1829): 357, 8 (1831):22; and "On the Use of the Warm Bath," p. 309. See also Alexander C. Robinson, "Report of Cases of Delirium Tremens, occurring in the Hospital of the Baltimore Alms House," *Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal*

- 1 (1840): 452–453; Annan, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 23:336; and Physicians' Prescription Book (1848), pp. 414 and 458.
43. Physicians' Prescription Book, *passim*.
44. Minutes, May 7, 1838.
45. Wright, "Report of Cases," AJMS 4 (1829): 357, 359. A contemporary writer suggests that leeches may be encouraged to bite by smearing a little milk or cream on the patient's skin. Robley Dunglison, *Dictionary of Medical Science*, 5th ed. (Philadelphia, 1845), p. 364.
46. Physicians' Prescription Book, pp. 149 and 168; Annan, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 23:329; and William Power, "Ligation of the External Iliac Artery for Femoral Aneurism," *Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal* 3 (1842): 31. The use of 40 leeches broke no records; a Philadelphia doctor ordered 60 applied to the throat of a child of four suffering from croup. Samuel Jackson, "Cases of Cynanche Trachealis," AJMS 4 (1829): 361.
47. Annan, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 23:332.
48. John Eberle, *Treatise of the Materia Medica and Therapeutics*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1823), 2: 259–269; and Rothstein, *American Physicians*, p. 53.
49. Not mentioned in the prescription book, but discussed by Wright in "Observations on the Treatment of Delirium Tremens," AJMS 6 (1830): 19–20.
50. Minutes, December 3, 1834; December 3, 1835; December 28, 1836; May 1, 1837; December 26, 1838; January 1 and 29, 1840; January 13, 1841; and January 12, 1842.
51. Minutes, December 4, 1833.
52. Minutes, May 6, 1833.
53. Minutes, July 17, 1839; January 15, 1840; and August 26, 1840.
54. Minutes, December 3, 1834. The apparatus cost \$35.75. Weather conditions were thought to influence the production and dissemination of epidemic diseases. See Dunglison, *Dictionary*, p. 462.
55. Minutes, March 18, 1841.
56. Wright, "Reports of Cases of Erysipelas, treated at the Baltimore Alms-House Infirmary," AJMS 4 (1829): 38.
57. *Baltimore Sun*, July 17, 1849.
58. Buckler, *Epidemic Cholera*, p. 25. For almshouse diet under ordinary conditions, see Douglas Carroll, "A Botanist's Visit to Baltimore in 1835," *Maryland State Medical Journal* 23 (April, 1974): 54.
59. Wright, "Report to Trustees," p. 61.
60. Wynne, "Typhus Fever," p. 424.
61. The dresser who served under Wright in 1827 had formerly been employed at the Philadelphia almshouse. Wright, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 3 (1828): 285. Wright also refers to dressers in his "Report to the Trustees," p. 50.
62. Prescription book, *passim*. Given time enough, unless gangrene set in, most ulcers were expected to yield to treatment. Faced with an outbreak of gangrene in 1831, the almshouse physicians experimented with many other local applications. Wright, "Report to Trustees," pp. 53, 67–68.
63. Carroll, "Medical Students," p. 41.
64. Minutes, May 4, 1835.
65. *Ibid.*, February 6 and May 6, 1833.
66. *Ibid.*, May 4, 1835. For purchases of surgical instruments, see Minutes, December 3, 1834, and December 30, 1835. Further purchases made in 1836 and 1839 amounted to \$140. Minutes, May 1, 1837, and January 1, 1840.
67. *Ibid.*, May 7, 1838.

68. William M. Baker, "Baltimore Infirmary: Reports of Surgical Cases," *Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (1840): 187.
69. Prescription Book, *passim*, July 8–October 30, 1848. Leah Church was admitted with an ulcer on July 8, was operated upon August 19, and was discharged "cured" on October 30, 1848.
70. See note 17, and Buckler, *Epidemic Cholera*, p. 11.
71. The three cases reported in the summaries (Minutes, May 7, 1838; January 29, 1840; and January 13, 1841) were all marked "cured," but a report prepared in 1840 shows that one of the inmates whose insanity was "puerperal" had been incarcerated for six months, another for 21 months, and a third for 28 months. Alexander C. Robinson, "Report of the Lunatic Department of the Baltimore Alms House," *Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal* 2 (1841): 34.
72. Robinson, "Report of the Lunatic Department," p. 33. In 1840 the trustees acknowledged their inability to provide "any curative treatment" for the insane poor, and asked for legislative relief. Minutes, January 29, 1840.
73. Minutes, February 19, 1834, and April 29, 1835.
74. Overseer's report, Minutes, January 13, 1841.
75. Robinson, "Report of the Lunatic Department," p. 33. The overseer's year-end inventories included in the minutes list other methods of restraint, including "gloves for maniacs," muffs, wrist bands, handcuffs, and a tranquilizing chair.
76. Robinson, "Report of the Lunatic Department," p. 41.
77. Summaries of cases 1832–1839.
78. Prescription Book, *passim*. See also John Eberle, *Treatise on the Practice of Medicine*, 4th ed., 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1838) 2:164–172, for a discussion of the treatment of mental illness.
79. Robinson, "Delirium Tremens," p. 461.
80. Wright, "Delirium Tremens," pp. 21–24. The abuse of opium itself was becoming a common problem, particularly among "women of ill fame." Robinson, "Delirium Tremens," p. 460.
81. Wright, "Delirium Tremens," p. 32.
82. Robinson, "Delirium Tremens," p. 460.
83. Minutes, January 1, 1840, and March 18, 1841.
84. Rough catalogs of the library's contents will be found in the Minutes which contain the physicians' reports (see note 17). Between 1833 and 1842 the trustees spent almost as much for medical books as for surgical instruments. See Minutes cited in note 67, as well as the Minutes for December 26, 1838; January 29, 1840; March 18, 1841; and January 12, 1842.
85. Physicians' report, Minutes, May 5, 1834. Contents of the museum are listed in Minutes of May 2, 1836; May 1, 1837; and May 7, 1838.
86. Carroll, "Medical Students," p. 42.
87. Annan, "Reports of Cases," AJMS 24 (1839): 332. Annan decried the educational system which made it possible for a young man to obtain a medical degree "by merely reading in an office, and attending two or three courses of lectures, of four months' duration."
88. Wright, "Report to Trustees," p. 49. In 1835 the latter category was dropped from the summaries, but it is obvious from the prescription book that in 1848 moribund patients were still being sent to the infirmary. As early as 1836, Dr. Miller had recommended that private physicians not send "dead or dying" persons to the almshouse unless they provided statements of the treatment they had been given, and would certify that such patients would benefit from the move. Minutes, May 2, 1836.
89. From summaries. See note 17.
90. Minutes, February 28, 1838.
91. Levin S. Joynes, "Statistics of the Mortality of Baltimore," AJMS (n.s.), 20 (1850): 310.

92. Samuel D. Gross, *Lives of Eminent American Physicians and Surgeons of the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1861), p. 816.
93. Wright, "Report to Trustees," p. 48; Minutes, October 20, 1841; and February 9 and 23, 1842; and Prescription Book, p. 72.
94. Buckler, *Epidemic Cholera*, p. 22.
95. By Dr. James Smith in 1801. *Baltimore Telegraph and Daily Advertiser*, December 3, 1801; and James Smith, "History of the Introduction of Vaccination in the State of Maryland," *Vaccine Inquirer*, No. 1, (1822): 16–45.
96. Prescription Book, p. 103. Anaesthesia was a prime topic of discussion at the American Medical Association meeting in Baltimore in 1848. Cordell, *Medical Annals*, p. 114.
97. *Transactions of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland*, 1856, p. 76.
98. James H. Miller, "Reports of Cases treated in the Baltimore Alms-House Infirmary," *AJMS* 14 (1834): 321–328; Charles Frick, "Of the Relative Proportions of the different Organic and Inorganic Elements of the Blood, in different Diseases," *AJMS* (n.s.), 15 (1848): 23–37; Wright, "Delirium Tremens," pp. 17–33; Wright, "Season Fever," pp. 303–311; T. H. Buckler, "On the Use of the Phosphate of Ammonia as a new remedy for Gout and Rheumatism," *AJMS* (n.s.), 11 (1846): 108–123; Robinson, "Report of the Lunatic Department," pp. 32–48; and Power, "Femoral Aneurism," pp. 28–37, esp. p. 36.
99. See summaries of cases, excluding the incomplete returns for fiscal year 1832–1833.
100. Wright, "Report to Trustees," p. 61. However, there were signs of deterioration as the buildings aged. The men's basement cells were described in 1850 as being kept "in the most uncleanly condition," and a visiting physician, helping out during a typhus epidemic, found himself "so completely overcome by the offensive effluvia as to feel faint and giddy." Wynne, "Typhus Fever," p. 423.
101. Wright, "Report of Cases," *AJMS* 5 (1830): 339.

Comment

Medical history like every aspect of academic history has changed enormously in the past two generations. It was a branch of intellectual history, with its focus on the elite, on great innovators and influential leaders. The history of medicine in 2005 is a much broader and inclusive field, with an interest on medicine as a social function, on ordinary patients—their experiences and ideas—and on local institutions and practitioners, the humble as well as the elite. Medical history has become part of general history in a way it had never been in previous eras.

Katherine Harvey's essay represents an early and thoughtful contribution to this important trend. Her study of the Baltimore almshouse and, importantly, its practice and practitioners demonstrates how local history and archival sources can illuminate the basic outlines of medical education, bedside therapeutics, and—in this case—the key role of the hospital in medical education and in the history of social welfare. There is still much to be discovered in governmental and institutional archives and this essay provides a model for the kinds of sources and questions that need still to be addressed.

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“Old Gunny”: Abolitionist in a Slave City

ROGER BRUNS and WILLIAM FRALEY

Whatever else ante-bellum Baltimore was, it could hardly be called a cradle of abolitionism. Although this raw port city numbered among its inhabitants some anti-slavery adherents, their number was small at best, if the ballot box can be used as a gauge for measuring the influence of abolitionism. The Free Soil ticket, for example, received twenty-one votes out of a total of 23,619 cast in the Presidential election of 1852, while the Republican party's first Presidential candidate, John C. Fremont, managed to garner only 214 of more than 26,000 votes counted in the election of 1856. Baltimore was, after all, the principal city in Maryland, which, like other slave states, looked with no small amount of disfavor upon anyone who advocated the abolition of slavery. Those who did found themselves subjected to ridicule, threats of physical abuse, and, occasionally, actual bodily harm.

The most frequent target in Baltimore for pro-slavery invective was William Gunnison—“Old Gunny” or “Gunny” in pro-slavery circles—the city's most outspoken abolitionist. Whatever his motives—ideological, political, or, considering his environs, antisocial—they certainly were not financial. Active in the abolitionist cause at least as early as the 1840's, Gunnison was forced to close his merchant's business by 1851 when he found Baltimore's bankers were no longer willing to do business with him. Falling back on the income from a small interest in real estate, Gunnison, serving as a delegate to the Buffalo Free Soil Convention in 1852 and as an elector on the Free Soil ticket for which twenty-one Baltimoreans voted in that year, continued to persist in his support of anti-slavery parties and platforms. He lent his efforts to the organization of a Republican party in Maryland and was a delegate to the party's state convention in 1856, a meeting which was mobbed by pro-slavery partisans.¹

1. William Gunnison applied twice for the patronage job of Collector of Customs in Baltimore, once in 1861, and again in 1882. His earlier application file was incorporated by the Treasury Department into his 1882 file. The combined files; located in Applications for Collec-

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By the late 1850's, the sobriquet, "Old Gunny," had become synonymous with ridicule, and Gunnison found little about his material circumstances to take the edge off his public notoriety. No longer able to finance the education of his son and daughter, he was forced to withdraw them from school. Taking stock of his situation, Gunny decided to leave Baltimore, but not before he tried his hand at one more "campaign."² Anti-slavery politics, and Baltimore as well, were apparently deeply rooted in Gunnison's psyche, so he stayed on to work for whomever the Republican party would choose for its Presidential candidate in 1860. Not inclined to be idle, he warmed up for the coming fray by agreeing, in 1859, to act as principal subscription agent in Maryland for a compendium of Hinton Rowan Helper's violent attack on slavery, *The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet It.*³

An acquaintance of Gunnison's since their meeting at a Fremont rally in Baltimore in 1856,⁴ Helper wrote to the Maryland abolitionist on January 27, 1859, informing him that someone was needed to obtain subscriptions for the compendium in that state. Gunnison was more than willing to accept what he obviously considered another commission in the relentless struggle to bring abolitionism triumphant to Maryland.⁵ His audacious and vigorous approach, however, was not one likely to elicit love and affection from his fellow Baltimoreans; nor, for that matter, was the book he agreed to distribute.

Maryland, like the rest of the slave states, viewed *The Impending Crisis* quite differently than did Gunnison. Reaction to the book was loud and angry. Leading

tor of Customs (1882), Record Group 56, General Records of the Department of the Treasury, National Archives, constitute a fascinating sketch of the man's life from the early 1840's to the early days of the Civil War. Included in this unusual file are Gunnison's correspondence with a number of important figures in the abolition movement and the Republican Party, newspaper clippings, hate mail, and letters of recommendation from important individuals of the period. There are also in the file a considerable number of letters to Gunnison from Hinton Rowan Helper, which, to our knowledge, have not heretofore been seen by historians. All the information used in the preparation of this article, whether it be quoted or paraphrased, has been, unless otherwise cited, taken from this file.

2. Gunnison to Salmon P. Chase, April 1, 1861.

3. A southern abolitionist who personally despised the Negro and who saw slavery as the means by which a self-interested aristocracy consciously held small farmers and laborers of the South in ignorance and poverty, Helper worked tirelessly to make his *Impending Crisis* the principal printed voice of abolition sentiment. By 1859 he had managed, largely through a carefully cultivated friendship with Horace Greeley and the endorsement of Greeley's newspaper, the *New York Tribune*, to persuade a number of influential Republicans, including sixty-eight members of Congress, to support a scheme for national circulation of a compendium of the original work as a vehicle for expressing Party sentiment on the slavery question. He was careful to conceal his own Negrophobia. Hugh C. Bailey, *Hinton Rowan Helper: Abolitionist-Racist* (University of Alabama, 1965), pp. 6, 41, 45-46 and *passim*.

4. Helper recommendation on behalf of Gunnison, March 16, 1861.

5. Helper to Gunnison, Jan. 27, 1859; Helper to Gunnison, n.d.

newspapers in the state, as in the rest of the South, bitterly assailed the book and anyone who endorsed it.

The Impending Crisis was considered by slave state legislatures to be literature of an incendiary nature, and, under existing laws in these states, persons possessing the book or selling it were liable to arrest and prosecution. In Maryland, offenders were generally prosecuted under an 1835 statute which prohibited "any person knowingly to circulate or any way knowingly assist in circulating among the inhabitants thereof any pictoral [sic] representation or any pamphlet, newspaper, handbill or other paper printed or written of any inflammatory character having a tendency to create discontent among and stir up insurrection of the people of colour of this state."⁶

Many in the state who read the book burned their copies to eliminate the evidence of their "culpability," but occasionally the long arm of the law reached out to find some less careful Marylander to punish him for his sins.⁷ One of these unlucky persons was Charles T. Dixon of Dorchester County, a friend of Gunnison's, who was arrested and dragged off to Cambridge to be tried for selling a copy of the work.⁸ Dixon's bail was set at twice the figure generally required in cases of this kind,⁹ but the man took his arrest with resignation and justified his actions with a bit of exalted prose. He wrote to Gunnison, "no man, when he hath lighted a candle covereth it, but setteth it on a candlestick."¹⁰

Although Dixon was referring to his own activities, he may just as well have been describing his friend, whose "candle" was anything but covered. Scurrying around Baltimore and addressing inquiries to other parts of Maryland, Gunnison drove himself without mercy to secure advance subscriptions to the compendium. By November 21, 1859, he was able to report to Helper that he had collected a grand total of eleven dollars in advance payments. Undaunted, he proclaimed that, in spite of a rather obvious hesitation on the part of individuals to pay for the work in advance, he could effectively distribute one thousand copies in the state.¹¹ To this end Gunnison continued his work, and, despite the reluctance of Helper and other leaders in the distribution effort to fill large orders without money in hand, he was, by the middle of December, able to get rid of several hundred copies, primarily to members of the working class.¹²

6. C. Dixon to Gunnison, Jan. 10, 1860, quoting from the "Dorsey Law."

7. Dixon to Gunnison, Nov. 15, 1859.

8. Anonymous to Editors of the *Baltimore Patriot*, Dec. 6, 1859.

9. Gunnison to Helper, Dec. 17, 1859, William Henry Anthon Collection of Letters Relative to the Publication of the *Impending Crisis*, New York Public Library, New York City. Hereinafter cited as Anthon Collection.

10. Dixon to Gunnison, Jan. 10, 1860.

11. Gunnison to Helper, Nov. 21, 1859, Anthon Collection.

12. Gunnison to Helper, Dec. 17, 1859, Anthon Collection; Daniel Orem to Gunnison, Dec. 20, 1859.

The harder Gunnison worked to find readers for Helper's book, the more obnoxious he became to the majority of Baltimoreans. He was, according to the *Baltimore Republican*, "in league with . . . bitter enemies of the South, and is laboring with these fanatics to overthrow the Constitution, and to incite our slaves to rebellion and murder."¹³ His mailbox became a popular dumping place for abusive and threatening letters. One such missive, written by an anonymous author in Charleston, South Carolina, contained the following graphic recipe for Gunnison's impending doom:

Take an abolitionist—or a sympathizer with Old Brown or as in your Case, an endorser of Helper's Book—Strip him stark naked—administer nine and thirty lashes on his bare back . . . Then boil fifteen gallons of Tar—Pour it liberally upon his head, neck, face, beard, shoulders, back & belly—Then take twenty pounds of live geese feathers, plaster them thoroughly into the Tar—Bid the subject rise—& you have a bird which Baltimoreans have never seen yet, but of which they will be delighted to have a view as exhibited in your person—The nine & thirty lashes . . . laid on, you can't fail to perceive, has a wonderful effect in preserving the plumage of this bird, as well as in imparting to it, a beautiful scarlet color.¹⁴

Undaunted by either editorial abuse or literary threats to his well-being, Gunnison continued his distribution efforts into the early months of 1860. His attention, however, was now divided as Maryland Republicans began to concentrate their efforts on the State Republican Convention, where delegates were to be selected to attend the party's National Convention in Chicago. The party in Maryland was divided into two major factions, both of which were determined to dominate the state convention and to elect their slate of national delegates. One faction, led by Montgomery Blair, the leading Republican in the state, counseled moderation on the slavery question and supported colonization of Negroes in Central America. The other faction, with which Gunnison was aligned, espoused the uncompromising abolitionism of William Henry Seward and supported Seward's candidacy for the Republican Presidential nomination.¹⁵

The Seward faction came to the state convention sensing victory, but their high hopes were soon shattered by what they considered a rather suspicious turn of events. No sooner had the delegates assembled in Baltimore's Rechabite Hall on April 26, 1860, than the meeting was invaded by a band of pro-slavery rowdies intent upon driving the frightened Republicans into the street. Gunnison ran for

13. *Baltimore Republican*, Jan. 21, 1860.

14. Anonymous to Gunnison, Dec. 19, 1859.

15. Reinhard Luthin, "A Discordant Chapter in Lincoln's Administration: The Davis-Blair Controversy," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, XXXIX (March, 1944), p. 27.

his life. With howls of "Old Ossawatomie" and suggestions of "tar and feather him" and "lynch him" ringing in his ears, he managed to hole up in the Marine Bank until the police brought the mob under control.¹⁶ While Gunnison and many of his fellow radicals were thus temporarily indisposed, other delegates reassembled at a private residence and selected Blair men to go to the National Convention in Chicago. The group also adopted a platform calling for colonization.¹⁷

The Blair men went to Chicago, and the Republicans, of course, nominated Abraham Lincoln for the Presidency. Gunnison now had his "one more campaign" to see through in Baltimore, though not for the man he wanted. In spite of the absence of Seward on the ticket, however, Old Gunny channeled all his energy into the Republican campaign to win Maryland's electoral votes. In the weeks that followed Lincoln's nomination, he organized "wide-awake" clubs and concentrated his efforts on getting the Republican point of view out in the open.¹⁸

Throughout the summer and into the fall, the "wide-awake" clubs and other Republican groups held rallies, all leading up to a climactic pre-election mass rally on October 29, in Baltimore's Richmond Market Place, normally a meeting ground for the Democratic faithful.¹⁹ The pro-slavery *Baltimore Clipper*, which took special delight in using Gunnison as a journalistic punching bag, warmed up to the forthcoming rally by suggesting a foot race between Old Gunny and a professional runner, an Indian from New York named Smith—distance, ten miles; the prize, two hundred fifty dollars. The *Clipper* declared:

Gunny, it is well known, has given evidence of the possession of remarkable speed, and if only stimulated by the encouraging shouts of white men, is competent to run for the Marine bank. A friend of ours who has seen Gunny running after a sable damsel, hearing of the desired match offers to go his pile on him any day or night.²⁰

The rally came off as scheduled without incident. It was, according to the *Border State*, a Republican newspaper, a "complete success" and "demonstrated beyond all cavil or doubt that Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Action, and entire Freedom in every constitutional right is at last secured to us by this bold and determined demonstration"²¹ The *Baltimore Clipper* disagreed slightly, reporting that, "The small batch of imported nigger-worshippers . . . assembled last night at the Richmond Market, and went through with the farce of a mass meeting."²²

16. *Baltimore Sun*, April 30, 1860.

17. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Maryland from the Earliest Period to the Present Day*, (3 vols; Baltimore, 1879), III, p. 355. f.n.

18. H. Welch to Gunnison, Oct. 10, 1860.

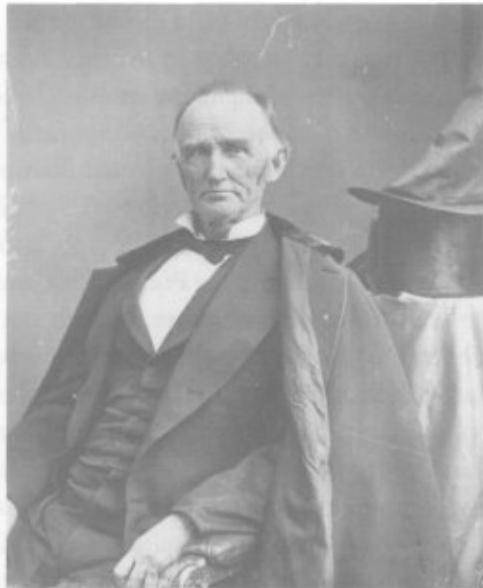
19. *Baltimore Patriot*, Oct. 30, 1860.

20. *Baltimore Clipper*, Oct. 25, 1860.

21. *The Border State*, Oct. 30, 1860.

22. *Baltimore Clipper*, Oct. 30, 1860.

"most popular" in the city, and "the most brilliant" in the country. He gave his audience a sketch of "Recent Events" and "Problems of the Times," and "the most important" part of his address was "a series of illustrations of public documents and documents of the administration." Montgomery Blair. (Library of Congress.)



The Wide-Awakes held a parade after the rally, and Gunnison was, uncharacteristically, not among the marchers. He had gained access to Levi Perry's shoe store, and, perched in the store window, waved encouragement to his allies as they filed by.²³ After discovering Gunny in his store, Perry, something less than a supporter of abolition causes, deposited him rather roughly in the street from whence he came.²⁴ The *Clipper* remarked of Gunnison's ouster, "The presence of ladies alone spared him the application of boots and shoes to that point of the human anatomy where kicks 'Hurts honor more than twice two thousand kicks before.'"²⁵

Just why Gunnison hid in Perry's shoe store during the parade is not altogether clear. The action was definitely out of character in a man who had never before blanched in the fear of abuse, physical or otherwise. He may have been preparing for things to come. The election of Lincoln to the Presidency and the resulting furor that spread throughout the slave states placed men like Gunnison in a position more precarious than they had ever been in before. They had reason, perhaps, to be even more uneasy than was a certain Wendell Philips, an outsider, who wrote Gunnison while passing through Baltimore, "I am in the camp of the Philistines! and I trust to your discretion; my life is in your hands. Expose me, and I will be added to martyrs of our cause. None know of my presence in this city. Be discreet! Be wise!"²⁶

23. *Ibid.*, Nov. 3, 1860.

24. *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1860.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Wendell Philips to Gunnison, Jan. 18, 1861.

If Republicans in Baltimore were nervous, they could not have been any more nervous than the President-elect, whose journey to his inauguration in Washington was to carry him through the port city. There were men in the city who, as one Baltimore Cassandra wrote to Lincoln in January, 1861, ". . . would glory in being hanged for having stabbed a black republican president."²⁷ On February 21, shortly before Lincoln was to raise a ceremonial flag at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, he got word that "banded rowdies" were planning to raise more than a flag when he passed through Baltimore the next day.²⁸ The President-elect journeyed through the city anyway—in the wee hours of the morning, hidden away in a sleeping car.²⁹

Events that took place in Baltimore in the days following the inauguration and the attack on Fort Sumter justified Lincoln's fears about the city. A number of the regiments that responded to the President's call for any army of volunteers after Fort Sumter had to march through Baltimore on their way to Washington, a situation not conducive to rational debate or a disinterested citizenry. Several companies of Union volunteers, on April 18, 1861, were hissed, bombarded with flying objects, and serenaded with enthusiastic, if not melodious, renditions of "Dixie."³⁰

On the following day, the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment was attacked by several thousand enraged citizens who blockaded streets and showered the troops with stones.³¹ The city was, as Henry Stump, Judge of the Baltimore Criminal Court, remembered it, ". . . in a state of disorder and excitement . . . the soldiers bore the pelting of the pitiless mob for a long time under a full trot, and more than three of them were knocked and shot down, before they returned the assaults."³² When the day's festivities were concluded, several soldiers and civilians had been killed, and scores had been injured.³³

Gunnison, apparently concluding that the existing state of affairs threatened his continued good health, wisely removed himself to Washington, where he joined the ranks of the Republican faithful who were besieging the Lincoln administration with requests for some of the material blessings that went with the party's occupation of the White House.³⁴

On April 22, he wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P.

27. George Hazzard to Abraham Lincoln, January, 1861, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

28. Enclosure with letter of Winfield Scott to Lincoln, Feb. 21, 1861, Lincoln Papers.

29. Edward Lanis, "Allen Pinkerton and the Baltimore Assassination Plot Against Lincoln," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, XLV (March, 1950), p. 9.

30. Scharf, *History of Maryland*, III, pp. 400–401.

31. Charles B. Clark, "Baltimore and the Attack on the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, April 19, 1861," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, LVI (March, 1961), p. 47.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Scharf, *History of Maryland*, III, pp. 403–409.

34. Gunnison to Salmon P. Chase, April 22, 1861.

Chase, requesting that he be considered for the position of Collector of Customs in Baltimore, or "any position which I may be found capable of filling . . ." He signed the letter "hastily yours."³⁵ Two days later Gunnison again wrote Chase and provided a possible explanation for the way in which he had ended his earlier letter. Gunnison was down to his last \$6.50 and on the verge of having his property sold in settlement of delinquent taxes. His son was making haste to leave Baltimore as the city was being purged of those who had voted for Lincoln; already five hundred of the 1,087 Baltimoreans who had voted for the Republican ticket had been hounded out of town by Southern volunteers who had been assigned to each ward for just such a purpose. Old Gunny emphasized that he was not abating "one jot or tittle of that independence to tyranny" which he clearly represented, but he made it very clear that he was indeed a man in need of a job.³⁶

Unfortunately for Gunnison and other Baltimoreans of similar political persuasion who were seeking government jobs, the Lincoln administration felt it necessary to pursue a conciliatory policy with regard to patronage in such pivotal border states as Maryland and Kentucky. As far as Lincoln's strategy of keeping the Union together was concerned, the importance of Maryland and the port of Baltimore was obvious. Of Baltimore, William Loundes Yancey had said in September, 1860, that it would be the New York of the South should Maryland be lured out of the Union.³⁷

As early as December, 1860, Lincoln had revealed his thoughts on the patronage in these vital states when he declared, "As to the use of the patronage in the slave states, when there are few or no Republicans, I do not expect to inquire for the politics of the appointee . . . I never have been, am not now, and probably never shall be, in a mood of harassing the people, either North or South."³⁸ There would especially be no hard-line Republicans appointed in Maryland, where, he was told, the great body of people "entertain no little aversion to a small band of men calling themselves Republicans."³⁹

Rumors of this patronage policy in the border states reached Gunnison, who viewed the whole affair with contempt. He wrote to Seward:

I am free to say that our antislavery friends here who have ever been Republicans from principle fear . . . the great pressure that is always brought to bear upon a President that they be crushed out . . . Is it possible that Mr. Lincoln will pass by such to give power and place to Politicians merely who ignore

35. *Ibid.*

36. Gunnison to Chase, April 24, 1861.

37. Charles B. Clark, "Politics in Maryland During the Civil War," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, XXXVI (Sept., 1941), p. 261.

38. Roy Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1953), IV, p. 152.

39. Henry Winter Davis to Lincoln, Feb., 1861, Lincoln Papers.



Salmon Portland Chase. (Library of Congress.)

principle and everything but a miserable groveling policy to please their enemies or conciliate the few who have not been strong enough to avow their conscientious convictions of right and vote in accordance with them, thereby bowing to the will of Mammon or the God of Trade.⁴⁰

If Gunnison had few friends in Baltimore, he had no trouble finding persons elsewhere who were willing to help him in his quest for a government position. He was able to put together an impressive list of recommendations from important figures in the Republican party, including several United States Senators and members of the House of Representatives. Helper himself put in a good word for Gunnison, declaring that he was the “only gentleman in Baltimore who had sufficient moral courage to allow his name to be publicly announced in the distribution of my book in that city and vicinity.” Gunnison was, in Helper’s opinion, “a thorough Republican in head and heart, and like every other man in the South who has dared to set his face against Slavery, has had to endure the contumely, proscription, and persecution of his neighbors.”⁴¹

Gunnison put together all his recommendations, scrapbooks filled with newspaper clippings, examples of hate mail that had come his way, along with samples of correspondence with leading Republicans illustrative of his struggles in Baltimore from as far back as 1848, and included the lot in his application for the Collector’s job. He did not get it.

Henry Hoffman, a Constitutional Unionist, became the new Collector of Cus-

40. Gunnison to William H. Seward, Nov. 12, 1860.

41. Recommendation by Helper on behalf of Gunnison, March 1, 1861.

toms in Baltimore. The other patronage positions in the city were filled by either men of Hoffman's ilk or by Republicans much more moderate than Gunnison.⁴²

Old Gunny kept trying, however. In 1862, he applied for the position of Consul at Singapore.⁴³ There is evidence that he also made application for a clerk's job in the War Department.⁴⁴ He was still trying in 1882, when he once again applied for Collector of Customs in Baltimore.⁴⁵ The outcome was the same as with all his earlier efforts—no job for Gunny, the long and faithful servant. Forgotten by his party, Gunnison continued to live in the city which had been so hostile to him.⁴⁶ He died there in 1892.⁴⁷

It might be expected that a man who had endured so much ill fortune during his lifetime could expect something better after death. With the libraries and book-stores filled to overflowing with works, both good and bad, on the Nation's greatest "trauma," and the proverbial woodwork crawling with Civil War buffs, it would seem that someone could write a kind word about Gunnison. This is not to say, however, that Gunnison has been ignored by the historians. In 1965, his work with Helper and the *Impending Crisis* was finally recognized in a major biography of the North Carolina abolitionist. The author, unfortunately, gave credit for Gunnison's work to somebody named William Garrison.⁴⁸

42. Luthin, "Davis-Blair," p. 29.

43. Letters of Application and Recommendation, RG 59, Records of the Department of State, National Archives.

44. Gunnison to John Alley, Jan. 18, 1862.

45. Gunnison to Chester A. Arthur, Jan. 2, 1882.

46. Apparently Gunnison continued to be active in Republican activities in Baltimore. There is evidence that he was a delegate from Maryland to the Republican National Convention in 1872. Petition accompanying Gunnison's letter to Chester A. Arthur, Jan. 2, 1882.

47. Diehlman Biographical Card File, Md. Hist. Soc., Baltimore.

48. Bailey, *Hinton Rowan Helper*, p. 54 and *passim*. Gunnison is also mentioned briefly in Scharf, *History of Maryland*, III, pp. 251, 384-385. Scharf's first reference is to Gunnison's association with the organization of the Republican Party in Maryland, and the second is to Lincoln's trip through Baltimore on his way to the inauguration in 1861. Bailey apparently misread the signature on Gunnison's letters in the Anthon Collection, which is cited earlier in the article and which the authors examined at the New York Public Library.

Comment

When William Fraley and I began work at the National Archives and Records Administration over thirty years ago, some of our responsibilities included searching through files in various record groups, many of which had never been opened by anyone. The proverbial red tape was just that—tape, for some unknown reason almost always red, that held groups of documents together.

In the case of court filings and claims against the government, some of the individual files were unusually large. One day we ran across a file that was particularly hefty. As we looked through the material, it seemed as if a claimant named William Gunnison had almost literally cleared out his desk, bundled all of the items, and sent them to Washington, where the clerks, naturally, bound it all in red tape.

We became entranced with the items—letters, notes, bills, and all kinds of personal information that shed light on the life of a Marylander whose identity to us was totally unknown. Eccentric, a troublemaker, he was an abolitionist of some notoriety in a city that did not much cater to abolitionism. We checked all the history books at hand and found nothing. After exploring the file further, we decided to check other files and additional sources on Maryland history. Our research led to the article.

There are many individuals who, in their own time, created a stir or made a difference and are forever lost in history. In this case, because of those records, "Old Gunny's" story was not lost. Bill Fraley and I are both retired from the National Archives now, but that file is still there, along with many others still unopened.

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The Madness of Disunion: The Baltimore Conventions of 1860

CHARLES W. MITCHELL

On Wednesday, April 18, 1860, the steamer *S. R. Spaulding* with approximately eighty passengers bound for Charleston, South Carolina, sailed from Baltimore to the accompaniment of music from Gilmore's band and loud cheers from those on shore. "For the alimentary comfort of those on board" one newspaper reported, "she is supplied with 4,500 pounds of fresh meat and poultry, and has besides 23 tons of ice."¹ She was due to arrive in Charleston, a city of fifty thousand, on Saturday, the twenty-first, in time for the Democratic Party's presidential nominating convention. The *Spaulding*'s passengers were Maryland's delegates to what was destined to be the most dramatic political convention in American history. Aboard the steamer were men named Johnson, Gittings, Landham, and Brent. None would take center stage in Charleston, though some would have significant roles.

Four years earlier, a party committee chaired by T. C. McCreary of New York had selected Charleston in the hope that holding the convention in a southern city would promote unity in what were exceedingly divisive times. Incumbent Democratic president James Buchanan, battered by sectional tensions and revelations of massive corruption in his administration, had chosen to retire after one term to the bucolic peace of his Pennsylvania farm. Congress was divided into two camps, northern and southern men, who were sometimes literally at each other's throats. On April 5, Congressmen John E. Potter of Wisconsin and Roger A. Pryor of Virginia almost came to blows on the House floor. Four days later they agreed to a duel—bowie knives were the weapons of choice—but cooler heads prevailed, and no duel took place. "There are no relations, not absolutely indispensable in the conduct of joint business, between the North and South in either House," South Carolina Senator James H. Hammond remarked. "No two nations on earth are or ever were more distinctly separate and hostile than we are here."²

The weather in the weeks preceding the convention had been hot and dry, but Charleston hotels and rooming houses nevertheless anticipated a lucrative week. Visitors discovered the price of a parlor and bedroom suite in a top hotel was approximately seventy-five dollars per day, though a state delegation could pay

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one hundred dollars per day to stay at St. Andrew's Hall. Breakfast could be taken for \$1.00, dinner and supper for \$1.50 each. "The southern delegates were at home; the city was theirs, doors were open, tables were spread, many were spared the discomforts of hotel fare in the lavender-drenched guest rooms of these wide-porched mansions." Murat Halstead of the *Cincinnati Commercial*, who with pronounced Republican leanings had come to observe the convention, was almost reluctantly taken with the city. "The most charming spot . . . is the Battery. . . . In the pleasant evenings the people of leisure congregate here; hundreds of carriages and buggies, full of ladies and gentlemen. . . . During the session of the Convention, there has been a band of music from Boston, used principally in serenading great men at a late hour and bringing out speeches."³ The rough behavior common to conventions was, of course, inevitable. The night before the convention opened Halstead complained, "there has been a great deal more drunkenness here today than heretofore. Most of the violent spreeing is done by roughs from the Northern Atlantic cities who are at last making their appearance. There have been a number of specimens of drunken rowdyism and imbecility about the hotels. And I hear, as I write, a company of brawlers in the street making night hideous."⁴

As the convention opened, temperatures were close to one hundred degrees, making the overdressed and not yet acclimated northerners especially uncomfortable. Rain briefly cooled the city as 303 delegates from thirty-two states filed into Institute Hall on Meeting Street for the opening ceremonies at noon on Monday, April 23. During the previous decade, the Whig Party had disintegrated over slavery. Democrats, too, now seemed on the edge of that precipice. In 1859, Senator A. G. Brown of Mississippi had said: "The South will demand at Charleston a platform explicitly declaring that slave property is entitled in the Territories and on the high seas to the same protection that is given to any other and every other species of property and failing to get it she will retire from the Convention."⁵

His words hung ominously over a city in which political men had gathered to address problems that politics no longer could solve. As in any such assemblage there were factions, some extreme, others moderate. Many Democrats realized that their failure to agree on a nominee might well lead to a Republican president, southern secession, and perhaps war. Still, large numbers were optimistic that in the face of "Black Republican" hordes their party would unite behind a candidate. Delegate-laden trains rolling into Charleston from the North were filled with talk about the "Little Giant," Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, the former judge who stood barely five feet tall. Though he had sponsored the Kansas-Nebraska Act⁶ with its consequently divisive doctrine of state sovereignty, Douglas was widely thought to be that man. His greatest strength was among Northwest and New England men, and he commanded support from at least half the delegates at the start of the convention. One correspondent reported that opposition to Douglas

was evaporating even as the convention opened. But Douglas was in poor physical and financial health, and his supporters had underestimated the power and tenacity of his enemies, who doubted that he could muster the two-thirds majority needed for nomination. Imposing forces were indeed converging to stop him. These included President Buchanan, still bitter at Douglas's refusal to support the proslavery Lecompton Constitution in Kansas,⁷ and Mississippi senator and former secretary of war, Jefferson Davis. Another hurdle in Douglas's path was William L. Yancey of Alabama, an extremist in the defense of slavery who had honed his fire-breathing rhetoric during a career in law and seven terms in Congress. "There was nobody quite like Yancey," one historian later commented. Though mild in manner, he had killed his wife's uncle in a fight and fought a bloodless duel with a fellow southerner while in Congress. As a young man he had shown interest in the antislavery spirit, which he now detested. An extremist, "he was for maintaining the Union—if only the rest of the country would accept the extreme Southern position." "It is understood" of Yancey, Halstead reported, "that he has a vast amount of ammunition for a bombardment of the Douglas castle, ready for use when the decks are cleared for action."

Northern eyes were also upon Charleston. A railroad lawyer and Illinois politician who had lost a sensational senatorial race to Douglas in 1858 reflected on the Little Giant's chances. "Opinions here, as to the prospect of Douglas being nominated, are quite, conflicting—some very confident he will, and others that he will *not* be. I think his nomination possible; but that the chances are against him."⁸ Southern nationalists, with no candidate of their own, were ready to fight Douglas to the bitter end. Moderate southerners, too, held strong reservations about him, especially in the wake of John Brown's failed abolitionist raid at Harper's Ferry.

The future of slavery was, of course, at the heart of the matter, and it lay treacherously in wait as the delegates paraded into Institute Hall. Prominent Republicans such as Lincoln and William Henry Seward had given speeches pledging not to interfere with the constitutional protection accorded slavery *where it existed*, but they were determined to prevent its spread into the territories, where, in their view, it merited no federal protection. Slavery was accepted, if not condoned, by most delegates from the northern states, but for many this visit to the city by the sea afforded their first look at real slaves and real masters. These northern Democrats had heard their southern colleagues praise slavery, its economic benefits, and its virtues as the natural relationship between white people and black. In early February, Mississippi's Jefferson Davis had introduced into the U.S. Senate resolutions designed to insulate slavery from reformers and abolitionists. Two of those resolutions—urging federal protection for slavery in the territories while denying their citizens the right to discourage or abolish the institution—were unacceptable to the Douglas Democrats, as everyone knew.⁹

Douglas had cast himself as the spokesman for the new Northwest, those territories that in the middle of the nineteenth century lay on the frontier, seeking entry into the Union. The Little Giant had effectively straddled the matter of slavery in the territories, and by Charleston his straddle had become a painful stretch. His troubles had begun six years earlier, in 1854, with the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and they worsened with a tactical misstep in Charleston when his men agreed to finalize the party's platform before the nomination was made. His forces were headquartered in Hibernian Hall, a two-story Gothic structure two blocks from Institute Hall. Its first floor was devoted to his campaign; the upper floor had several hundred cots for delegates whose exhaustion would presumably let them sleep through the noise and the early Carolina summer.

The Little Giant would learn in Charleston just how badly he had wounded his presidential aspirations while winning his Senate seat against Lincoln in 1858. During that campaign Lincoln had asked him if residents of a U.S. Territory could lawfully exclude slavery prior to joining the Union and writing a state constitution. Douglas, knowing that to answer "no" would alienate Illinois free-soil voters, had answered "yes." That clinched his victory. But the price was steep in his relations with the Southerners—the extremists found him unacceptable, and he made the moderates nervous.

In the month leading up to the convention, several southern state Democratic parties had instructed their delegates to walk out of the national convention if its platform did not include federal protection for slavery in the territories. At least one delegate, from Texas, had informed Douglas of this threat. That Jefferson Davis's proslavery Senate resolutions had been endorsed by the Senate Democratic caucus had increased the tension in Charleston (though Davis, like many southerners, conceded that states had the right to outlaw slavery). Word soon spread that seven southern delegations were ready to leave en masse if the platform lacked the territorial slave code—whose inclusion everyone knew would make Douglas unelectable in November. If Yancey and Alabama walked out, it was said, the other Cotton States—Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas—would follow, and so would some men from North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri. There had been little civility on the eve of the convention, and an ugly tone was set the first day, when a Pennsylvania delegate attempting to speak was driven from the floor by cries of "God damn you, sit down!" and "What the hell do you want to talk for?"¹⁰

On the second day, Douglas won a key early round when the committee on organization agreed, by a vote of 197 to 102.5, to allow delegates to vote as individuals if they had not been instructed by their states to vote as a bloc. This had two effects: It freed about twenty-five southern delegates to support Douglas, but it also set off a firestorm among the radical southerners that further stiffened the lines of battle.¹¹

Somehow a note of frivolity crept into the air as well. On Wednesday, April 25, "the gallery was crowded with ladies, and it being filled, on motion, several hundred who were crowding outside, unable to enter the gallery, were admitted to the floor of the convention, occasioning much good feeling." Alabama's L. P. Walker informed the ladies that Mr. Cochrane of New York was a bachelor, following which the gentleman indeed "acknowledged his desperate condition and expressed his willingness to enter into the marriage relation." Walker announced that it was apparent that the reason why Cochrane had not married "was because he could not." He then "moved to lay the New York bachelor on the table." The chair "tolerated this nonsense for a time, but at last interposed and summarily shut down upon it." The floor of Institute Hall was packed, for "those who have tickets send them out after they get in, and others come in," complained one delegate. The chairman of the Vermont delegation, it was announced from the floor, died of apoplexy. And the credentials committee, adjudicating contested seats in four states, ruled in favor of the sitting delegates, allowing E. M. Landham and Robert J. Brent, of Maryland's Fourth Congressional District, to retain their seats.¹²

By Friday, the fifth day of the convention, wind and cold rain had dispelled the heat, and Charleston's bars, gamblers, and pickpockets were doing a brisk business. The platform committee presented three reports. The majority report, from the fifteen southern states, Oregon, and California, called for federal protection of slavery on the high seas and in the states and territories, whose citizens could not abolish or interfere with slavery; the acquisition of Cuba; and prompt construction of a railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific. The minority version, from the northern states, reiterated the Democratic platform of 1856, known as the Cincinnati platform, and tried to reassure the South by pledging adherence to Supreme Court decisions affecting slavery in the territories. Benjamin Butler of Massachusetts, who in a year would be the most hated man in Maryland, presented his platform of one, which merely reaffirmed Cincinnati.¹³ Southerners found the minority report unacceptable. Yancey delivered a podium-pounding speech for the majority report that made clear the southern unwillingness to yield:

What right of yours, gentlemen of the North, have we of the South ever invaded? . . . Ours are the institutions which are at stake; ours is the property that is to be destroyed; ours is the honor at stake—the honor of children, the honor of families, the lives . . . we yield no position here until we are convinced we are wrong.¹⁴

That evening George E. Pugh of Ohio gave the northern response, angrily rejecting Yancey's demand that northern Democrats accept slavery and its extension into the territories. "Gentlemen of the South," he thundered, "you mistake us—you mistake us—we will not do it!" After a recess, Pugh took the floor again

for two more hours. He warned the southern men that their demands for protection of human property in the territories had no constitutional foundation, and that if such was their reason for remaining in the party, they must go. "In an instant the house was in an uproar—a hundred delegates upon the floor, and upon chairs, screaming like panthers, and gesticulating like monkeys. The President, for the first time, completely lost control over the Convention; not a word was audible. The reporters climbed upon their tables, the delegates mounted the chairs, the people in the galleries stretched their necks and hung over the balustrade." At last, by a small majority, the convention voted to adjourn.¹⁵ Here was the first moment of crisis in Charleston, and how these men resolved it would go far toward determining the outcome of the presidential election and the Union's chance of remaining whole.

From Washington Douglas telegraphed his friends to support the Cincinnati platform and uphold the Dred Scott¹⁶ decision but no more—they were not to give ground on the issue of popular sovereignty in the territories, whose citizens must be left free to choose or reject slavery. His managers hoped to lose no more than thirty to forty delegates, leaving sufficient numbers to ensure their man's nomination, though the game could just as easily go the other way—a larger desertion would make it impossible. New York navy agent George Sanders sent President Buchanan a lengthy telegram that included the entire revised minority report and urged the president to make a complete shift and support the Little Giant. Buchanan's response was "an angry outburst when he learned that the message had been sent collect, and that he had paid \$26.50 for its wisdom." On Sunday, amid continuing cold rain and wind, the Ohio and Kentucky delegations discovered that their private whiskey stocks, to which they attributed their good health, had run dry.¹⁷

On Monday, April 30, with Douglas's chances more perilous than ever, Baltimoreans read about Sunday's developments in Charleston: "There have been three fights within 24 hours. Two of the Ohio delegates threw plates at each other at the Mills House, and one drew a pistol while the other clinched. Col. Craig, of Missouri, and a newspaper reporter also had a rough and tumble fight at the Mills House, and Captain Levy and Mr. White have also had a fight in a bar-room." One Pennsylvania delegate attacked another over his refusal to sign a document—later found to be fraudulent— instructing the Pennsylvania delegates how to vote. Chaos on the floor of the convention rivaled that of the streets and taverns and eventually embroiled the Maryland delegation. As various points of order were being discussed amid deafening noise, William S. Gittings attempted to address the chair but was called to order. Someone shouted, "Mr. President, it is a mistake—I didn't second that man's motion down there." Gittings demanded to know "who it was who spoke so disrespectfully of him." A delegate identifying himself as Tom Hooper rose and denied saying anything disrespectful, to which Gittings

replied that since no insult was intended, "the gentleman will call at my room and take a drink."¹⁸ The president of the convention threatened to leave the chair if the uproar, which "would have drowned the thunder of a twenty-four pounder," did not cease.

By April 30 most of those who had come from the North to observe the proceedings had left, their rooming contracts and patience at an end. Their departure left hotel hallways navigable, barrooms accessible, and—more important—the Institute Hall gallery full of Charlestonians, whose applause for southern, anti-Douglas oratory was deafening. That same day the Douglas forces managed to ram their minority platform through the convention by the slim margin of 165 to 138, displacing the majority report.¹⁹ Then, to cheers from much of Charleston's high society, "fifty delegates from the lower South thereupon walked out."²⁰ On the floor, Robert Brent of Maryland warned the southerners that their extreme views would lead to a Black Republican president opposed to slavery—presumably Governor Seward of New York—and a Congress of similar views. Finding himself ruled out of order, Brent accused the chair of treating him so because he was from a slave state. That evening, at a rally of Douglas supporters, Brent accused men with personal feelings against the Little Giant of encouraging the secession movement and exhorted the majority not to bend to the minority.²¹ The South Carolina delegation, moderate in temperament and lacking instructions to withdraw, now did so in the face of boisterous encouragement from Charlestonian spectators.

Douglas's captains had entertained few illusions that their man—or any other, for that matter—would be nominated without the backing of the whole party, despite the rule allowing delegates to vote individually if not otherwise instructed by their states. Chairman Caleb Cushing then handed down a ruling on balloting that dashed Douglas's remaining hopes: to be nominated a candidate must receive two-thirds of the ballots of the total number of delegates accredited to the convention. Two-thirds of the ballots cast by delegates physically in the hall would not do, thanks to a rule enacted at the 1844 convention in Baltimore.²² Douglas would still need 202 votes.

Ardent southern advocates of states' rights—in 1860 this meant several things but primarily that slaves were property, legitimized by the Constitution—were willing to meet the issue head-on should the Republicans win in November and honor their pledge to prevent the spread of slavery. If that occurred secession, they reasoned, would be the most palatable course. The time to settle on the 1856 Cincinnati platform and ignore the issue of federal protection of slavery in the territories had passed, for "Southern passions had been too deeply aroused."

Men whose feelings were less passionate "did not see their way clearly but . . . bent before pressure, or simply followed the crowd for lack of any real guiding star. It may have been very hard . . . to see that a bitter-end fight on the slavery

issue in this convention would be one ounce more than party or nation could carry without breaking.”²³

A smiling Yancey—who early in the Confederacy would be sent to Europe as its emissary, leaving more moderate men to run the affairs of the South—addressed the renegade southern delegates and others in front of the courthouse late in the evening on that second Monday. “A great crowd . . . wildly cheered an independent Southern republic. The city was mad with a passion not felt since Nullification days.” Yancey called his colleagues to gather in a “Constitutional Democratic Convention” and field a candidate for the presidency. The next day the southern Democrats organized themselves at Military Hall, then moved to the Charleston Theater for business, where Yancey referred contemptuously to the larger group of Democrats over in Institute Hall as the “rump” convention.²⁴ They chose a patrician, Senator James A. Bayard of Delaware, as chairman and adopted the majority platform they had championed at Institute Hall. The seceders would support any man chosen other than Douglas, and if Douglas were chosen, they would nominate their own candidate.²⁵ Their course settled, they sat back at the South Carolina House to watch their northern brethren closely. Confident of their power in the party, they waited for the peace overture from Institute Hall they were certain would come.

Political men in the North were on tenterhooks, too: “This writing being early in the morning, Douglas is not yet nominated,” Lincoln wrote to a political friend. “But we suppose he certainly will be before sun-set to-day, a few of the smaller Southern states having seceded from the Convention—just enough to permit his nomination, and not enough to hurt him much at the election. This puts the case in the hardest shape for us.” Later the same day he wrote again: “We now understand that Douglas will be nominated to-day by what is left of the Charleston convention. All parties here dislike it. Republicans and Danites that he should be nominated at all; and Doug. Dem’s that he should not be nominated by an undivided convention.”²⁶

Douglas was placed into nomination on May 1. When King of Missouri called his name, “a feeble yelp went up from the Northwestern delegations. It was not hearty and strong, but thin and spiritless. There was no hopefulness in it, but something of defiance. It was as much as to say, ‘Well, if we can’t nominate him, you cannot nominate anybody else.’” The balloting began. The Maryland delegation left the floor briefly for consultations, but the minutes of their deliberations are lost to history. Votes were spread among four men, with Douglas in the lead, though there was little optimism that he could attract the 202 votes that would represent the prized two-thirds.²⁷ The inability of the convention to focus on another candidate—even knowing that the southerners would likely accept anyone but Douglas—was ominous. The Douglas men were despondent, and Halstead wrote that northern and southern Democrats had resigned themselves to Republican New York Governor Seward’s becoming the next president.

The Boston Brass Band opened business on May 2 with "a dozen spirited airs." The *Baltimore Sun* reported that "the state of things in Charleston seems to impart some interest to the so-called Union convention to be held at Baltimore on the 19th instant." Maryland's Gittings said after the thirty-fifth ballot he would move that the convention reassemble in Baltimore in June. The delegates were less than enthusiastic, and "Mr. G. assured the convention that Baltimore was no longer a Plug Ugly town and promised the delegates a hospitable welcome." Gittings finally withdrew his motion "though with the promise that it would be renewed." A Tennessee delegate offered Philadelphia in lieu of Baltimore, but he was also denied. After the fifty-fourth ballot, Gittings suggested the gentlemen "face the music" because nominating a candidate now was "inexpedient." This time the chair ruled him out of order. The fifty-seventh ballot was the last, and again Gittings offered his motion to adjourn to Baltimore on June 1, only to find it rejected a third time. Douglas, meanwhile, had 152.5 votes, far short of the two-thirds required for nomination.²⁸

By the morning of Wednesday, May 3, it was plain that the convention was hopelessly deadlocked. Fewer spectators took to the galleries, which subsequently were less noisy. "The ladies' gallery is very thin, and the poor creatures look down into the hall, vainly seeking objects of interest." Douglas men said they hated the party and hoped that any Democratic nominee other than Douglas might lose. The more despondent were heard wishing to join the Republicans. They were put out of their misery by the irrepressible Gittings, whose motion finally carried following abortive attempts to insert Philadelphia and New York as the new convention site.²⁹ The delegates adjourned, to try again in Baltimore at noon on June 18. Only seven ladies remained in the ladies' gallery. Steamers bound for New York and Philadelphia and the night train north were filled to overflowing, and the discomfort for those headed to Washington was far from over—they faced six changes of cars along the way.

The seceders were stunned. They had moved to Military Hall and taken to calling themselves "retiring delegates," expecting at any moment to rejoin their colleagues following the nomination of a compromise candidate.³⁰ Few had sought or expected a permanent break, but now their bluff had been called, their convention blown apart. This vocal southern minority had refused to see any difference on slavery between Douglas and a Republican. No one, it seemed, was satisfied, except the gamblers and pickpockets who had feasted on delegates for nine days. The southern firebrands agreed to meet in Richmond on June 11 and adjourned, their journeys home also made uneasy by fearsome uncertainties.

Ghosts of Sheets and Pumpkin

As Democrats reorganized back in their home states and Republicans prepared for their second national nominating convention, the Constitutional Union Party

opened its first convention in Baltimore at noon on May 9, 1860. The day before the city marked the occasion with a parade that packed the streets and showed off its new steam fire engines. The assembly gathered in a federal court house that was formerly the First Presbyterian Church, at the corner of Fayette and North Streets. The old church had an illustrious political history—Andrew Jackson had been nominated there in 1828 and Martin Van Buren in 1836. The building had galleries on three sides and “gas fixtures . . . in the event that the convention may sit at night.” In attendance were approximately seven hundred aged and well-connected gentlemen who didn’t like the way things looked. Murat Halstead observed that many “are of the ‘eminently respectable’ class of gentlemen—and most of them are somewhat stale in politics. . . . The delegates seemed to be in high spirits, and to be confident of their ability to make at least a powerful diversion. The general foolishness of the two great parties has given the third unusual animation.”³¹ Many of these gentlemen were from the border states. Distressed by the escalating rhetoric pushing the nation toward division and war, they had first met late in 1859 in search of a middle ground and thought they had found it in the proposition that North and South could remain together if they somehow could remove slavery as a national issue.

The effort was led by the venerable Senator John J. Crittenden of Kentucky,³² who had invited fifty senators and congressmen unaffiliated with Republicans or Democrats to fuse with the remnants of the Whig and American parties. This new political party would put forth a platform featuring “the Union and the Constitution” and opposition to the Democrats.³³ Founding principles were “the removal of the slavery question from party politics, development of national resources, maintenance of honorable peace with all nations, strict enforcement of the laws and the powers of the Constitution, and respect for state rights and reverence for the Union.”³⁴ All states had been invited to send delegates to a national convention in Baltimore. Twenty-two had accepted, emboldened by the Democratic fissure in Charleston and the prospect that the Republicans might also split in Chicago over Seward. Some questioned the relevance of this party in a time when people were moving to extremes of the political spectrum—the *New York Herald* described the convention as a “Great Gathering of Fossil Know Nothings and Southern Americans”—but these men were determined to save the Union and believed they were on a path to do just that.³⁵

The Constitutional Union party had first stirred in Maryland in 1857, a state with strong support for the American or Know-Nothing Party. Three years later former state Know-Nothing leaders and ex-Whigs cast their support to John Bell of Tennessee, who had been sympathetic to the Know-Nothings. Local Know-Nothing organizations easily transferred their allegiance to the Constitutional Union party. Casting themselves as the only viable alternative to the Democrats, Southern Know-Nothings invited all opposed to the Democrats to join them in a

new conservative party, dedicated to "Union and Constitution." On April 19, the Maryland convention of the Constitutional Unionist Party at Carroll Hall elected two delegations of former Know-Nothings as Maryland's delegates to the national convention. The two groups, one of which included Baltimore Mayor Thomas Swann, fought over who would represent the city.³⁶

Senator Crittenden, the guest of Congressman John Pendleton Kennedy while in Baltimore, opened the convention at noon on May 9. He "was received with applause from the galleries, and the ladies, who occupied the west gallery, waved their handkerchiefs."³⁷ Former New York Governor Washington Hunt was chosen as temporary chairman. Halstead found the opening events tedious, though perhaps only in comparison to the raucous experience two weeks earlier in Charleston:

The Convention insisted on applauding nearly every sentence, and several times refused to let [Mr. Hunt] finish a sentence. It was worse than the applause given by an Irish audience at an archbishop's lecture . . . during the first hour and a half of the session, I presume at least one hundred rounds of applause were given, and the more the "spreads" applauded, the greater became their zeal. . . . I have stated . . . that the Douglas men were the most noisy fellows in the world. . . . I take it back. The "Plugs" can beat them at their own game . . . every speech was received in this "tremendous" style. The moment a speaker would say Constitution . . . Union, American . . . or anything of the sort, he had to pause for some time until the general rapture would discharge itself by stamping, clapping hands, rattling canes, etc. . . . and if he should . . . commence the broken sentence over again, ten to one, when he arrived at the patriotic point where the fracture commenced, the storm would break out again with redoubled fury.³⁸

Early signs pointed to a ticket with Sam Houston of Texas and Edward Everett of Massachusetts. A resolution passed specifying the manner of voting, though its requirements presented difficulties for the Maryland delegation, which "being unable to get proper construction of the . . . resolution through its head without a surgical operation, retired for consultation, and to have the necessary operation performed." On the first ballot, Bell took 68.5 votes to 57 for Houston, and on the second ballot the prize was his, by a count of 125 votes to 68 for Houston, who had been the choice of southern Know-Nothings and Baltimore ladies, who from the galleries showered the platform with bouquets.³⁹ Bell was a safe choice for cautious men. A wealthy Tennessee lawyer and owner of eighty slaves, he had had an impressive career: state legislator, congressman, Speaker of the House, secretary of war, and senator. His vice presidential mate, the distinguished Everett, did not wish the honor (Everett would give a magisterial oration three years later honoring the fallen at Gettysburg, though it would be eclipsed in history by

Lincoln's 272 words). Maryland gave 7.5 votes to Bell and half a vote to Houston on both ballots.⁴⁰ Only one utterance of slavery at the convention violated the proscription against public statements on that subject—when E W. Grayson of Pennsylvania declared that Republicans and Democrats differed on the matter only as to how it must be legislated in the territories, by Congress or the territories themselves. His pronouncement was loudly hissed. Republicans, in full campaign form following Lincoln's May nomination in Chicago, derided the Constitutional Unionists as "Bell Ringers" and "Do Nothings," despite the pleas of Henry Winter Davis for a cooperative arrangement between Bell and Lincoln in which one would have no ticket in states where the other was strong (and would have meant no Lincoln ticket in Maryland).⁴¹

This amiable gathering of Constitutional Unionists held none of the sectional bitterness that had destroyed the Whigs and now threatened the Democrats. Baltimore lawyer Brantz Mayer proclaimed slavery a false issue, men's disagreements over it "as harmless and hollow as ghosts manufactured out of sheets and pumpkin."⁴² Those enamored of this Constitutional-Unionist middle ground hoped the new party would attract enough votes to deprive the major parties of outright victory by sending the election to the House of Representatives. Though the logic of Constitutional Unionism was hard to fault, its fundamental principle—glorifying Constitution and Union and enforcing its laws—was hardly the engine to ignite public interest in the politics of the time. Its proponents did not see that their thinking was soft and hollow, and that in 1860 men were aroused by the more passionate appeals of other parties.

The Madness of Disunion

On June 15 and 16, 1860, between six and eight thousand people—delegates, press, and hangers-on, more than had been in Charleston—poured into Baltimore for the next round of the Democratic convention. Several state delegations brought their own bands. "During Saturday Barnum's Hotel, the Eutaw House, and the other hotels, received their delegations and guests . . . and in the afternoon the rotundas, halls and parlors, presented a scene seldom witnessed, blocked as they were with baggage, and filled with the strangers in their linen dusters, too busy aiding to swell the political hubbub and hum of voices, to change their travelling apparel." The *Baltimore Sun* had been sanguine from the start about the chances of success:

though the adjournment has been made to a city in which popular sentiment is as staunch in support of the South as in any of her sister cities, yet it must be admitted that the convention having been originally organized at Charleston, that should have been the place for the reassembling of it . . . the Convention would do honor to itself and justice to the party, by uniting

upon some worthy, unobtrusive, honest and substantial man, who . . . will be acceptable to the South and command the confidence of the North. Such a nomination would tend in an immeasurable degree to heal the dissensions which now disturb the Union.⁴³

The writer predicted that, should the Democrats fail to settle on a nominee, there would be two Democratic candidates, splitting the vote and forcing the election of the Republican Lincoln. The *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser* engaged “two of the most accurate and expert Phonographers of Washington city, with a full corps of assistants, to furnish us with a *verbatim* report of the proceedings,” and in the same edition offered an analysis of Democratic difficulties and an endorsement of the Constitutional Union Party:

It is not possible to gratify or satisfy both extremes of the Party, because they separate upon issues that are irreconcilable . . . no amount of ingenuity, human or angelic, can reconcile Popular Sovereignty with the views of Southern delegates, or can construct a platform that will sustain both sections at once . . . the Seceders at Richmond . . . do not hesitate to call the darling doctrine of Popular Sovereignty “a snake that is to be strangled.”

Having previously endorsed Everett, the paper went on to urge the election of the Constitutional Union ticket: “We will fight on their side . . . and engage to confine Mr. Lincoln to his original occupation of mauling rails.”⁴⁴ Lt. Col. Robert Edward Lee, acting commander of the Department of Texas, United States Army, wrote to a friend: “the papers will give you news of the Baltimore convention. If Judge Douglas would now withdraw and join himself and party to aid in the election of [Vice President John] Breckinridge, he might retrieve himself before the country and Lincoln be defeated. Politicians I fear are too selfish to become martyrs.” Baltimore City delegates resolved in a meeting on June 14 at Rechabite Hall that, while they would support the eventual nominee, they would express a strong preference for Douglas.⁴⁵

On Sunday evening, June 17, bands attached to various delegations drew several thousand excited spectators to Monument Square for what one newspaper called “airs in the square.” While the early demeanor of the crowd seemed to favor the Little Giant, anti-Douglas sentiment began to surface, judging from the reactions to speeches by assorted dignitaries that lasted until almost midnight. In the end, there was little reason to hope that what had failed in Charleston would succeed in Baltimore. It was rumored that many southern delegates were ready for a reprise over the slave code, and that northern men were ready to fight and drive their southern brothers out of the party. Senator Judah Benjamin of Louisiana was mistaken, thundered Ohio’s George Pugh, “if he supposes that the men

who stood there at Charleston for two weeks in that atmosphere voting down your resolutions again and again, and voting for Stephen A. Douglas, are going to be tired when it comes to Baltimore, which is a much more agreeable atmosphere for them." The more extreme southerners, having met in Richmond the week before, had decided not to act until the larger convention reconvened in Baltimore. They were poised for further disruption. Their delegations, excepting Florida, had been instructed by their state party organizations to reclaim the seats they had vacated in Charleston, and most of them were in Baltimore for that purpose. The other southern states, with the exception of South Carolina, had chosen new delegates in new elections, and a bitter fight over the legitimate heirs to those seats would be the first order of business.⁴⁶

On the Monday morning of June 18, 303 delegates and almost two hundred editors and reporters (despite allotted space for only one hundred newspapermen) filed into the Front Street Theater at 10 A.M. to open the convention. Unlike those at Charleston, the Baltimore galleries were with Douglas all the way. Thorough preparation had preceded the visitors to the theater, which featured "a rich and beautiful scenery to relieve the heaviness of the unplastered walls." The theater's dress circle had been designated as the gallery for the ladies, who were to be admitted free. Reports circulated that free tickets distributed at Barnum's Hotel by the chairman, Caleb Cushing, were being scalped for between two and five dollars. The delegates got down to business with a speech from Cushing reminding them that they were in Baltimore to decide the fate of the seats of Democrats who had bolted in Charleston, and, following that, to finalize a platform and choose a presidential nominee. At the outset tensions seemed to abate, as "the prospect of a solution of the difficulties . . . appeared last evening to be a shade better. The prominent men of both sides were more inclined to talk calmly over the prospects of the party, and while the firmness of neither section appeared to be in the least shaken, there seemed to be a more lively appreciation of the madness of disunion on the question of candidates."⁴⁷

The credentials committee began sorting out the contested seats in the southern delegations. At first the Douglas men were willing to embrace all Charleston prodigal sons except those from Alabama and Louisiana, whose new delegates they insisted be seated, as retribution for the behavior of Yancey and Slidell.⁴⁸ Other pressing matters arose. Mr. Salisbury of Delaware addressed the chair on the matter of tickets, the supply of which had apparently been infected by counterfeits, causing new ones to be issued. "Some of my delegation are outside and cannot get into the hall—that they wish tickets; cannot get tickets, and do not know who issues tickets to this Convention. I would like the chair to indicate by what authority tickets are issued, and how delegates will gain admission to the floor of this Convention." After being informed that tickets had been sent to the chairman of each delegation, Salisbury was asked to render himself more under-

standable, because "he is now speaking from the stage of a theatre, and it is important that he should face those in the rear, and address them, and not the chair, if he desired to be heard." Salisbury replied, "I wish to say to the gentleman . . . that I am not a theatre man. I never attended a theatre ten times in my life." Came the reply: "Well, you are making your *debut* then, and we want to hear what you say!"⁴⁹

Six hours of speeches exhorted the delegates either to restore the seceders to their seats or reject their attempts to return. The president complained about the noise level from the gallery, and Frederick delegate Bradley Johnson objected to the behavior of the spectators: "As a delegate from Maryland I ask that representatives of this State may be cleared from the imputation cast upon them by the disorder in the gallery. Those joining in the disorder there are not the people of Baltimore. I ask of the Chair that the galleries may be cleared." The convention loudly shouted him down. Three more hours of oratory greeted those on Monument Square that evening, as Douglas and Yancey supporters labored to outspoke and outshout one another.⁵⁰ The following day heavy thunderstorms greeted the adjourning delegates, dampening evening speeches and prompting brisk sales of pro- and anti-Douglas umbrellas. On the third day, June 20, some complained that the police were preventing delegates from entering the theater.

The political climate seemed favorable enough to Douglas. Signs of support for him in the Deep South emerged. The editor of the Aberdeen, Mississippi, *Conservative* had written to Douglas two months before Baltimore:

It is a source of much regret to your numerous friends in this section of Mississippi, that the state will be represented in the Charleston convention by gentlemen who, it is honestly believed, do not entertain the political sentiments of the majority of her people. The delegates from this portion of the state . . . are men who reflect the sentiments of that faction in this State known as "*fire-eaters*" of the most rabid description—advocating a re-opening of the African Slave Trade, and a protective code for the Territories. . . . It will be urged in that body by the delegates from this State that you will not receive the support of the State or of Alabama in November, but . . . I pledge you the electoral vote of Mississippi at the ballot box. I write this letter as the representative of that large and respectable class of gentlemen in this locality known as "Douglasites" by their enemies, but who are certainly in the majority, though they will have no voice in the Convention. Mississippi will vote for Douglas in the event of his nomination, and I shall repeat it . . . at Charleston next week, to those delegates from this State who in opposing your nomination, do not reflect the will of the majority in this State.⁵¹

A schoolteacher-lawyer had written him shortly after Charleston:

Perhaps you would like to hear a few words from a political friend residing in the land of the seceders. . . . The breakup of the Charleston convention produced no excitement among the masses of the people. There was much regret that you were not nominated. It is confessed on all sides that you are the only democrat North or South that can beat the Black Republicans. If the people could express their sentiments the seceders would not be sustained and others would be sent to Baltimore in favor of your nomination. . . . It is a common assertion here that you could carry this State over Jeff Davis' head by from five to ten thousand majority.⁵²

There was plenty of excitement away from the theater floor. Prominent Baltimorean Reverdy Johnson, the former U.S. senator and attorney general who had worked very hard for the Little Giant in Charleston, hosted Douglas's supporters at his house on Monument Square, which provided a platform for evening speeches throughout the week. Just across the square, at Gilmor House, was the southern headquarters. Rival speakers, bands, and crowds thronged the square, which "packed fuel beneath the already boiling cauldron."⁵³ On the evening of June 19, the Douglas men fired rockets from the windows.

Rule or Ruin

As the week wore on, the nighttime noise from the large crowds outside Douglas headquarters was exceeded only by that emanating from the southern headquarters across the square.⁵⁴ Tempers rose with the temperature of early summer, and fisticuffs erupted on the convention floor between two men from the rival Arkansas delegations. One slapped his insulter and drew a pistol from his pantaloons, "and a duel only avoided after a series of notes were exchanged according to the custom of the times." A more serious incident occurred when two rival Delaware delegates fought and, at five o'clock the following morning, Congressman Whitely of Delaware attacked Joshua Townsend of Ohio in the hall of their hotel, the Maltby House, as the latter sleepily made his way to the washroom.⁵⁵

This was the first national political convention with telegraph wire in place for instant reporting, and rumors flew across the nation. One held that only some seceders would be invited back, which most knew would bring on another walkout. Another claimed that Douglas was poised to withdraw.⁵⁶ Early on June 21, the fourth day, as the committees were beginning their reports, "a tremendous crash was heard in the centre of the building, occupied by the New York and Pennsylvania delegations. Delegates rushed in masses to the windows, and climbed, nimbly as monkeys, over the chairs of the reporters seeking . . . to place themselves under the protection of the president."⁵⁷ A section of floor had collapsed, and though no one was injured and damage was not extensive, it was a harbinger of bad tidings. A recess

was called so the floor could be repaired, and despite the inevitable jokes about the party's weak platform, few dared see symbolism in the reconstruction.

The credentials committee presented three reports. The majority, a carefully crafted compromise, "called for the seating of new delegations from Alabama and Louisiana, for the admission of both the old and new delegations from Arkansas and Georgia with the dividing of the vote between them, and for the readmission of the bolting delegations from Texas, Mississippi, and Delaware whose seats were not contested." Two minority reports were defeated. One invited all the bolters to return, and a second, from Gittings of Maryland, concurred with the majority report but required that Yancey's Alabama delegation be accepted, too, though Gittings withdrew it the next morning, expressing as he did so his infatuation with Yancey. The seceders still loudly insisted on the slave-code platform denied them in Charleston, their credo in Baltimore being "rule or ruin" wrote Georgia's Alexander Stephens. They hoped delegates from the upper South would join them, and if denied their threat was bolder still—they would bolt for good and form a new party.⁵⁸

Attitudes were plainly hardening, and the mood soon grew ugly. During an argument over tickets on the fourth day, William Montgomery made a disparaging remark about his colleague and fellow Pennsylvanian, Josiah Randall; following the day's adjournment, Randall's son assaulted Montgomery, and only fast action by the crowd averted a more serious incident. On Monument Square that night, bands drowned out opposing orators. The pro-Douglas Keystone Club band of Philadelphia marched through the center of the square into a hostile rally "throwing rockets and bombs to open their way" and were promptly attacked by an anti-Douglas mob in front of the Gilmor House. "A surging wave of humanity swept upon the band, knocking their instruments right and left, and blows were struck promiscuously." The police were of little help until the Pennsylvanians retired. The anti-Douglas rally "continued to a late hour."⁵⁹

The next day came the tragedy everyone expected and most feared. On Friday, June 22, the Douglas majority report passed by 150 to 100.5. During the evening session, Charles W. Russell of Virginia spurned the compromise offered by the Douglas men to seat only some of the southern delegates and announced his state's withdrawal from the theater on Front Street. Ignoring pleas from the party chairman about the perils of a split, the Virginians "rose in a body, and passing into the aisles, proceeded to leave the theatre, shaking hands and bidding personal friends good-by, as they retired." Next went most delegates from the Upper South and a few proslavery men from the North.⁶⁰ Speeches predicting dire consequences were issued amid great disorder that reflected the gravity of the moment. One hundred and five men walked out, more than a third of the total, and they included all the delegates from the Deep South, North Carolina, California, Oregon, Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas. Nineteen of twenty-four from Tennessee and twenty-five of thirty from Virginia left, as did half of the Marylanders after Brad-

ley Johnson proclaimed that some delegates had authorized him to announce their withdrawal in order that they might cast their lot with the South. Saturday brought more bad news. Caleb Cushing and a majority of the Massachusetts delegation withdrew. Spokesman Benjamin Butler—with his prizefighter bodyguard from Boston behind him—broke the news. “We put our withdrawal before you, upon the simple ground, . . . that there has been a withdrawal, in part, of a majority of the States; and further (and that, perhaps, more personal to myself) upon the ground that I will not sit in a convention where the African slave-trade—which is piracy by the laws of my country—is approvingly advocated.”⁶¹ Butler’s view was not uncommon in the North. The nation’s founders had allowed slave importation to be banned beginning in 1808, and Congress had kept the trade out of the Northwest Territories. Men like Butler held the view that the founders had acted so precisely because they found the whole business immoral and wished to prevent its spread. Many believed that, whatever its constitutional and legal protections, slavery would wither away if righteous men would fight its expansion into free states and territories.⁶²

The dwindling number of delegates accredited to the original meeting chose Ohio Governor David Tod as chairman of the convention’s remnants. Tod immediately recognized the call to vote before more delegates left. This he did in “the din of an indescribable confusion. There were partial responses from some . . . which could hardly be heard, and the Convention seemed rapidly becoming a roaring mob.” Gittings asked if the two-thirds rule was in effect. The question became moot before he got an answer, for on the second ballot Douglas received 181.5 votes, with eighteen going to various others. At last the Little Giant had the prize in his grasp, and the vote was then made unanimous for him.

All decorum evaporated in the commotion that greeted the nomination. An unusual statement came from the chair: “Gentlemen, you all know that the Chair feels so much disposition to join in these yells that *he* can’t keep order.” The convention recessed until evening to choose the party’s nominee for vice president, an honor awarded to the delegates from the South who had remained with the party. They chose Benjamin Fitzpatrick of Alabama on the first ballot, though later he would decline in favor of Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia, himself chosen by the Democratic National Committee. Thomas M. Lanahan of Baltimore was chosen for the National Executive Committee.⁶³ On Saturday, June 22, the convention adjourned *sine die* at 9:45 P.M.

The nine (of sixteen) bolting Maryland delegates had walked from the Front Street Theater to Maryland Institute Hall to join their anti-Douglas brethren, who called themselves the National Democratic Convention. Institute Hall accommodated eight thousand people, and its galleries were full as the seceders’ convention opened at noon on Saturday, June 23. Marylanders E. S. F. Hardcastle and William P. Bowie were chosen as temporary secretary and vice president,

respectively. Tremendous applause greeted the arrival of Caleb Cushing to assume his seat as convention chair. William Yancey "glowed with satisfaction. . . . Garnett, of Virginia, whose countenance is usually grave as Don Quixote's, seemed pleased as a schoolboy with new boots." One delegate thanked the Almighty for now being able to speak without being hissed and not having to listen to nauseating speeches.⁶⁴ Former Kentucky senator and current vice president John Breckinridge was quickly nominated on one ballot for president, and Joseph Lane of Oregon for vice president.⁶⁵ Maryland delegates in their excitement offered to pay the expenses of the entire convention. The convention adopted the majority platform from Charleston—supported by the fifteen slave states, Oregon, and California—which protected slavery in the territories. The whole affair, dull in its unanimity and its contrast with the northern meeting, was over in a day. Yancey addressed his fellow renegades at length about Alabama's position. Two weeks later, in Illinois, the Republican candidate wrote to a friend:

The signs now are that Douglas and Breckinridge will each have a ticket in every state. They are driven to this to keep their bombastic claims of *nationality*, and to avoid the charge of *sectionalism* which they have so much lavished upon us. . . . It is an amusing fact, after all Douglas has said about *nationality*, and *sectionalism*, that I had more votes from the Southern section at Chicago, than he had at Baltimore! In fact, there was more of the Southern section represented at Chicago, than in the Douglas rump concern at Baltimore!⁶⁶

John Contee, a Maryland delegate from Buena Vista, published a letter to Marylanders on June 25 in which he explained that he had tried faithfully to honor his obligation to them as a delegate, and that Cushing's departure for the seceders' convention legitimized that gathering as the true National Democratic Convention. He urged his fellow citizens to support Breckinridge and Lane.⁶⁷ On June 26 the *Baltimore Sun* announced its support for Douglas as the legitimate nominee of the Democratic party. The fire-eaters had fallen on their swords, and whether their wounds were fatal would not be known for certain until November.

NOTES

1. *Baltimore Sun*, April 21, 1860; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 19, 1860. The *American* spelled the name "Gilmor."

2. William B. Hesseltine: "Pryor-Potter Duel," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 27 (1943–44): 400–409; Senator James H. Hammond to Major Hammond, April 22, 1860, quoted in Roy F. Nichols, *The Disruption of American Democracy* (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1948). Potter also once knocked the wig off Mississippi Congressman William Barksdale.

3. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 24, 1860 (room prices.) Nichols, *Disruption of Democracy*, 291; William B. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln: Murat Halstead*

- Reports the Caucuses of 1860* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1960), 40–41.
4. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 18; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 24, 1860.
 5. Percy Lee Rainwater: *Mississippi, Storm Center of Secession* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1938), 109. South Carolina Institute Hall could hold approximately 3,000 people. It later became known as Secession Hall because the state's Ordinance of Secession was signed there on December 20.
 6. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 allowed residents of those territories to choose whether they would be free or slave. It became a rallying cry for the doctrine of popular sovereignty, whose chief proponent was Douglas. The Act overrode the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which had prohibited slavery in either territory.
 7. The Lecompton (Kansas) constitution, which allowed slavery in the Kansas territory, was drafted by a rump convention with no legitimate claim to represent its residents. Buchanan's man in Charleston was Senator John Slidell of Louisiana, assisted by Senators James A. Bayard of Delaware and Jesse D. Bright of Indiana, and New York navy agent (and former American consul in London) George N. Sanders.
 8. Bruce Catton, *The Coming Fury* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1961), 2; Allan Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln, Vol. II, Prologue to Civil War, 1859–1861* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 216; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 24; Abraham Lincoln to Hawkins Taylor, April 21, 1860, quoted in Roy P. Basler, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 4:45. Emphasizes Lincoln's.
 9. Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln: Prologue*, 179.
 10. Ibid., 207n; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 24, 1860; Nichols, *Disruption of Democracy*, 295; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 23.
 11. Nichols, *Disruption of Democracy*, 296–97. The Maryland delegates supported this measure, with 4.5 votes for Douglas and 3.5 votes against him. See also, Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 25, 29–31. *Proceedings of the National Democratic Convention, convened at Charleston, S.C., April 23, 1860* (Washington: Thomas McGill, Printer, 1860), 9, gives the roll call of states, though an arithmetic error in the tally shows 103.5 votes for Douglas.
 12. *Baltimore Sun*, April 26, 1860; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 33–34, 37, 39; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 26, 1860. William D. Bowie was chosen Vice President and Levin Wolford Secretary of the Maryland delegation. The death of John S. Robinson, the Vermont delegate, is reported in *Proceedings*, 14. Seats were contested in Massachusetts, Maryland, Illinois and New York. See *Proceedings*, 12.
 13. The Cincinnati platform—named for the site of the 1856 Democratic National Convention—called for the right of territories to write a constitution, with or without slavery, and petition to join the Union. See Betty D. Greenman, "The Democratic Convention of 1860: Prelude to Secession," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 67 (1972): 232; Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln: Prologue*, 214; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 45. For resolutions see *Proceedings*, 19–21. The majority report contained five resolutions, the minority, six; both included the provisions on Cuba and the Mississippi-Pacific railroad.
 14. Speech of W. L. Yancey of Alabama, to the National Democratic Convention, April 28, 1860, quoted in McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 215, and Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln: Prologue*, 217. Also *Richmond Dispatch*, April 24, 1860, quoted in Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 32.
 15. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 27, 1860; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 54–56.
 16. Dred Scott was a Missouri slave taken by his owner to Illinois and, later, Wisconsin, both

free states. When Scott sued for his freedom, the Supreme Court ruled that he was not a citizen and thus had no standing to sue. This 1857 decision also declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional because its provision for freeing slaves taken into non-slave states deprived their owners of property without due process, in violation of the Fifth Amendment.

17. Nichols, *Disruption of Democracy*, 302; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 67.
18. *Baltimore Sun*, April 30, 1860; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, May 1, 1860. Halstead reported the incident slightly differently, stating that when Gittings rose to renew Butler's motion to vote for a nominee, the Alabama delegate, whom Halstead called "Cooper," said, "I don't second the motion of that man down yonder" (italics added). Also Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 69–70. William S. Gittings was a delegate from Baltimore City. The *Baltimore Sun* on June 22, 1860, referred to Thomas B. Cooper as a delegate from Alabama, and its June 23 issue referred to both Hooper and Cooper. The *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser* gives the name as "Hooper" on May 1. The Douglas men were staying at the Mills House, and southern men at the Charleston Hotel. The reporter brawling at the Mills House was Langmore of the *St. Louis Republican*.
19. Maryland's delegates voted 3.5 yeas and 4.5 nays. Butler's report was defeated 198 to 105, with Marylanders voting 5.5 yeas and 2.5 nays. See *Proceedings*, 29–30. Just prior to the second vote, the gentlemen in the gallery were asked to refrain from using the heads of the men below them as spittoons. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 69.
20. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 215. The delegations from Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Florida, and Texas left. See *Proceedings*, 35–46, for their withdrawal announcements.
21. *Baltimore Sun*, April 30, 1860; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 30 and May 2, 1860; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 72.
22. Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 36; William Lee Miller, *Arguing About Slavery: The Great Battle in the United States Congress* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 481. Miller explains that the two-thirds rule had been used in 1832 and 1836 but not in 1840, and that its reinstatement at the 1844 convention—led by southern delegates—gave the South a regional veto over party decisions. Caleb Cushing was a brilliant orator and former Massachusetts congressman who had entered Harvard at age thirteen. His early abolitionist ardor had cooled considerably by 1860.
23. Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln: Prologue*, 220; Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 31.
24. Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln: Prologue*, 221; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 86. The Nullification Crisis of thirty years earlier had been brought on by South Carolina's challenge to federal power, in this case over the right of the national government to levy import tariffs against the states. The seceding Gulf States were followed by four delegates from Arkansas, three from Missouri, two from Georgia, and one each from Virginia and Delaware. On the night of April 30, most of the remaining Georgia and Arkansas delegates joined them.
25. Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 38–39. Halstead reported that the southerners convened in St. Andrew's Hall, making no mention of the Charleston Theater. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 85, 87.
26. Abraham Lincoln to Cyrus M. Allen, a lawyer in Vincennes, Indiana, May 1, 1860, and Lincoln to Lyman Trumbull, May 1, 1860, both in Basler, *Collected Works*, 4:46, 47. "Danite" was an Illinois term for administration men.
27. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 98; *Baltimore Sun*, May 2, 1860. Nichols, *Disruption of Democracy*, 306, and Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 99, state that two Maryland delegates voted for Douglas, whereas the *Baltimore Sun* reported that 3.5 of Maryland's votes went to Douglas.
28. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, May 3, 1860; *Baltimore Sun*, May 3, 1860.

Halstead reported that Gittings was ruled out of order after the fifty-fifth ballot (Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 104). The results of each ballot can be found in *Proceedings*, 46–53. The “Plug Uglies” were one of the most notorious of Baltimore’s violent political gangs. The violence they inspired in the first half of the nineteenth century, especially around the time of elections, had by 1860 been greatly curtailed by electoral and police reforms, but the name endured as a symbol of rowdyism.

29. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 101, 105. Gittings’s motion finally carried, 168 to 88. See *Proceedings*, 54.

30. No Marylanders joined them.

31. *Baltimore Sun*, May 9, 1860; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 121, 123.

32. Less than a year later Crittenden would author the great compromise named for him, one of several attempts early in 1861 to entice the seceded states back and keep the upper South and border states from joining the Confederacy. The Crittenden Compromise was a series of constitutional amendments to protect slavery. It was opposed by Lincoln and defeated on the Senate floor, 25 to 23, on January 16, 1861. All 25 votes were cast by Republicans. In one of many ironies of the Civil War, two of Crittenden’s sons became generals, one on each side.

33. Donald W. Curl, “The Baltimore Convention of the Constitutional Union Party,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 67 (1972): 254.

34. Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell of Tennessee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), 349.

35. *New York Herald*, May 9, 1860, quoted in *ibid.*, 352.

36. Jean H. Baker, *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Political Parties from 1858–1870* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 40; *Baltimore Sun*, April 20, 1860. The Constitutional Unionists elected one delegation, the Know-Nothing city convention the other.

37. *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 1860. Kennedy was a lawyer, novelist, member of the Maryland House of Delegates, and from 1838 to 1846 a Whig member of Congress from Maryland. He served as Millard Fillmore’s secretary of the navy in 1852 and 1853. He became an ardent Unionist after the Civil War began.

38. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 123, 127. Halstead used several slang expressions of the time: “spreads” were important people, and “Plugs” referred to the rowdy gangs of the period. Other terms included “swells” for men dressed too well, and “screws” for misers. See Hesseltine, 307.

39. *Ibid.*, 131–34; Parks, *John Bell of Tennessee*, 353, gives the results of the second ballot as 138 for Bell and 69 for Houston.

40. Four Maryland delegates attended, and three were given key posts: Dennis Claude became vice president; S. C. Long, secretary; and U.S. Senator Anthony Kennedy (brother of John Pendleton Kennedy) was chosen a member of the party’s Executive Union Committee. See Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 124.

41. Bernard C. Steiner, *Life of Henry Winter Davis* (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1916), 162–63, 169, quoted in Parks, *John Bell of Tennessee*, 373. Davis, a Know-Nothing congressman from Baltimore from 1858 to 1865 (not continuously) and one of the outstanding orators of his generation, was a strong Unionist who opposed secession on both constitutional and economic grounds.

42. Mayer Papers, quoted in William J. Evitts, *A Matter of Allegiances: Maryland from 1850 to 1861* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 146.

43. *Baltimore Sun*, June 18, 1860.

44. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, June 18, 1860.

45. Robert E. Lee to Major Earl Van Dorn, July 3, 1860, Lee Papers, Library of Congress,

- quoted in Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 68; *Baltimore Sun*, June 15, 1860.
46. *Baltimore Sun*, June 18, 1860; *Congressional Globe*, 36th Congress, 1st Sess., 2247, quoted in Nevins, *Emergence of Lincoln: Prologue*, xx; Greeman, "The Democratic Convention of 1860," 243.
47. *Baltimore Sun*, June 18, 1860; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, June 18, 1860.
48. Nichols, *Disruption of Democracy*, 313.
49. *Baltimore Sun*, June 19, 1860. Halstead spelled the name "Saulsbury," as did the *Sun* in its June 23 edition and the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser* on June 19.
50. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 98, 207; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, June 19, 1860. Johnson later fought for the Confederacy and, in 1864, led a cavalry raid that terrorized Baltimore City.
51. R. D. Shropshire to Douglas, April 16, 1860, quoted in Rainwater, Mississippi, *Storm Center of Secession*, 119 (italics his).
52. S. S. Fairfield to Douglas, May 19, 1860, quoted in Rainwater, Mississippi, *Storm Center of Secession*, 129–30.
53. *Baltimore Sun*, June 18, 1860.
54. *Ibid.*, June 20, 1860.
55. *Ibid.*; Greeman, "The Democratic Convention of 1860," 247; *Baltimore Sun*, June 21, 1860; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, June 21, 1860.
56. *Baltimore Sun*, June 18, 1860. By telegram and letter, Douglas authorized his forces to withdraw his name for the sake of party unity, though his men refused to do it. Not until he was finally nominated was his offer to withdraw revealed to the convention. The full text of Douglas's letter appeared in the *Sun* of June 25.
57. *Baltimore Sun*, June 22, 1860; Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 211.
58. Greeman, "The Democratic Convention of 1860," 249. Stephens, a Democratic representative from Georgia who voted against secession in the 1861 Georgia convention but was fated to become Vice President of the Confederacy, quoted in George Fort Milton, *The Eve of Conflict: Stephen A. Douglas and the Needless War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), 468.
59. *Baltimore Sun*, June 22, 1860; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, June 22, 1860.
60. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 220–21, 234. The reports of the credentials committee are given verbatim on pages 211–19. See also McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 216.
61. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 234. Accounts of the *Baltimore Sun* and Halstead differ regarding which delegates left the convention. Halstead noted that Butler's voice was "like a crosscut saw." *Ibid.*, 24.
62. Article 1, section 9 of the U.S. Constitution contains the founders' compromise on slavery. Its vague language reflected the issue's sensitivity: "The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight . . ."—when Congress did in fact ban it.
63. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 244–45, 255. Maryland cast 2.5 votes for Douglas. Fitzpatrick received 198.5 votes to one for William Alexander of New Jersey. Halstead reported that Douglas was actually nominated on the following day. The *Baltimore Sun* and *Baltimore American* both refer in their coverage of the Charleston meeting to a Maryland delegate named F. M. Landham, though Hesseltine on page 284, lists T. M. Lanahan of Baltimore City as a Maryland delegate and makes no mention of a delegate named Landham.
64. Hesseltine, *Three Against Lincoln*, 267–68; *Baltimore Sun*, June 25, 1860. Institute Hall was

also called Market Hall at that time. William C. Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States* (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1973), 24, writes that nine of sixteen Maryland delegates bolted. I have not been able to verify that claim elsewhere.

65. Breckinridge received 81 votes, to 20 for former senator and Buchanan ally Daniel S. Dickinson of New York, though after the first ballot the Dickinson votes switched to Breckinridge to make his nomination unanimous. Maryland cast 1.5 votes for Breckinridge and 3 for Dickinson. *Baltimore Sun*, June 25, 1860. Many sources erroneously state that Breckinridge was nominated in Richmond, where the seceders first met following Charleston.
66. Abraham Lincoln to Anson G. Henry, July 4, 1860, in Basler, *Collected Works*, 4:81–82. (Emphasis Lincoln's.)

67. *Baltimore Sun*, June 25, 1860.

Comment

This article evolved from research for a book on Maryland's Civil War roots. The failure of the Democrats to agree on a candidate at their 1860 nominating convention raised the tally of such gatherings in Baltimore that spring from one to three, and made a Democratic victory in November ever less likely. The significance for Maryland lay in the majority of votes cast in the presidential election that autumn for pro-Union candidates. Unionism would remain prevalent in much of the state throughout the war.

Our quadrennial exercises to choose presidential candidates have degenerated into vapid and costly television extravaganzas. Large sums are expended to preclude any possibility of debate, suspense and surprise, ensuring that platitudes fill the steamy, smoke-filled halls once full of delegates eager for a free exchange of ideas. When I had the opportunity in 1980 to attend a nominating convention, as an elected delegate from Maryland, I witnessed first-hand the stage-managed, modern convention, whose preordained results, so unrepresentative of voters, contrast starkly with its nineteenth-century ancestor.

Those intrigued by how we select those who govern might read about these erudite men in wing collars and straw hats. Some things they did badly—for example, they excluded all but white males from their proceedings, and they occasionally punched each other. But they did much well. Though we will not likely return to the style of convention described in these pages, we can learn from these characters. And their rhetoric and behavior make a ripping-good read.

CHARLES W. MITCHELL
Baltimore

The Recruitment of Negro Troops in Maryland

JOHN W. BLASSINGAME

The long sectional conflict between the North and the South reached its climax when the American Civil War began on April 12, 1861. Without becoming enmeshed in the highly controversial issue of what precipitated the war, one might safely conclude that the immediate cause was the firing on Fort Sumter. Certainly a myriad of events, emotions, differences in "cultures," variances in economic systems, and Negro slavery (whether a moral wrong or a positive good) all contributed to the chain of crises that culminated in the firing on Fort Sumter. With the first shot, volunteers rushed with unbridled enthusiasm to enlist and to defeat the Confederates in "ninety days." Later in the war, the Union resorted to large bounties, a conscription law, and repeated calls in order to raise an army. As a result of the decrease in the enlistment of white volunteers, soon after the outbreak of hostilities, the Lincoln administration realized the importance of Negro manpower. Lincoln made public this realization when he asserted in the Emancipation Proclamation that the freeing of the slaves and their participation in the war effort was a "necessary war measure." Although the enlistment of Negroes had begun in 1862, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton accelerated recruitment in March, 1863, when he ordered Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas to recruit Negroes in the Southwest. The War Department centralized control of colored troop recruitment when it set up the Bureau of Colored Troops in May, 1863.¹

However we touch upon the recruitment of Negroes during the Civil War, we come back for proper perspective to the activities of the "Border States." In fact, by virtue of their geographical location, manpower and economic resources, they were in a position to provide aid of inestimable value to either side. Maryland, bordering on the Union capital and serving as a passageway between the warring sections, stood out as one of the most important of the "border states."

As early as July, 1863, the Bureau of Colored Troops had been directed by

1. Benjamin P. Thomas and Harold M. Hyman, *Stanton, The Life and Times of Lincoln's Secretary of War* (New York, 1962), p. 263; Stanton to Thomas, March 25, 1863, *Negroes in the*

This article first appeared in volume 58 (1963). John Blassingame (1940–2000), acclaimed scholar of African American history, wrote several landmark works, including The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South (1972) and Black New Orleans, 1860–1880 (1973).

Stanton to order Colonel William Birney, son of abolitionist politician James G. Birney, into Maryland to recruit free Negroes. The small, non-slaveholding farmers, who were dependent on free Negro labor, raised a vigorous protest against Birney's recruitment of free colored persons. The farmers believed that if the free Negroes were taken out of the state they would have been forced to hire slave labor at ruinous rates. The farmers were furious at the thought of being dependent on the slave owners and their anger increased in proportion to the number of free Negroes recruited in Maryland. Because of the growing resentment against the small slaveholding element (13,783), such influential Marylanders as Baltimore's Circuit Judge Hugh L. Bond, Congressman Henry W. Davis, and former State Senator Henry H. Goldsborough, commandant of the drafted militia, began to suggest that Stanton enlist slaves, with or without compensation to the owners.² Their sentiments must have appealed to Stanton, for according to the census of 1860 there were 83,942 free Negroes and 87,000 slaves in Maryland.³

Despite the outcries of the small farmers, the slaveholders stubbornly resisted any attempt to enlist slaves. In fact, their resistance grew when, even without War Department orders, some recruiters took the slaves of loyal owners. In retaliation, the slaveholders in Frederick (after consulting with officials in Annapolis) arrested one of Birney's recruiting agents, John P. Creager, Marylander, in August, 1863, for illegally enticing slaves away from their masters. Because he was a citizen of Maryland—and punishable according to its laws—the War Department refused to defend Creager. Senator Reverdy Johnson, Unionist, represented the interests of Maryland slave owners when in Congressional debate he complained of the injustice of the recruitment of slaves without providing compensation for their masters. Former Governor Thomas H. Hicks, a staunch Unionist who had possibly saved the state from secession by refusing to call a special session of the legislature in 1861, expressed the anxiety Marylanders felt at having Negroes recruited, especially during harvesting and planting time.⁴ He wrote to Lincoln on September 4, 1863, expressing his views about Negro troops:

I do and have believed that we ought to use the Col'd people, after the rebels

Military Service of the United States, Vol. III, part 1, 1138–41. Adjutant General's Office (AGO), Record Group (RG) 94, National Archives (NA) (hereinafter cited as NIMS); General Orders, No. 143, May 22, 1863, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880–1901), Series 3, III, 215 (hereinafter cited as the OR).

2. Charles B. Clark, *Politics in Maryland During the Civil War* (Chesertown, 1952), p. 100; Charles B. Clark, *The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia* (3 vols., New York, 1950), I, 514; Bond to Stanton, August 15, 1863, NIMS, III, pt. 1, 1484–90; *The Biographical Cyclopedias of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia* (Baltimore, 1879), pp. 476–477.

3. U.S. Bureau of Census, *Negro Population 1790–1915* (Washington, 1918), p. 57.

4. Thomas H. Hicks, *DAB* (21 vols.; New York, 1932, 1933), V, 8–9; J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Western Maryland* (2 vols.; Philadelphia, 1882), I, 211–226; *Congressional Globe*, 1st Session,

commenced to use them against us. What I desire now is that if you can consistently do so you will stop the array of uniformed and armed Negroes here.⁵

As the congressional elections neared in September of 1863 Hicks expressed even more concern that agitation of the "Negro question" would embarrass the administration.

In the election, the citizens of Maryland, under the benevolent "guidance" of the Union Army, overwhelmingly chose candidates of the Unconditional Union Party (radical) over Democrats and Governor Bradford's Union Party (conservative).⁶ Governor Augustus Williamson Bradford, slaveholder, Unionist, Maryland delegate to the Peace Conference in Washington in February, 1861, opposed the radical programs (enlistment of Negroes and immediate emancipation) of the Unconditional Unionists.⁷ Yet, he wanted to end slavery for he believed it was the cause of the war and as a result of it was dead as an institution. Undaunted by the victories of the Unconditional Unionists, Governor Bradford held conversations with Lincoln and Stanton immediately after the elections about discontinuing the recruitment of slaves. They assured him that it had not been decided to recruit slaves and no one had been authorized to do so. Fearing that Democrats would take over control of the state government, Bradford endeavored to halt the "illegal" recruitment of slaves as well as Negro troops from being quartered in Maryland. However, recruiters, without authority, continued to recruit slaves.⁸ As a result of the Governor's entreaties and the unrest caused by quartering Negro troops in the state, on October 1, 1863, Lincoln ordered the suspension of the recruitment of colored troops in Maryland.

The suspension of recruitment impaled Lincoln on the horns of a dilemma: he did not wish to antagonize Marylanders by recruiting Negroes, yet he was in dire need of Negroes to serve in the army. In an effort to solve his perplexing problem, Lincoln ordered Stanton to meet with Governor Bradford toward the end of September. At that meeting, Bradford agreed: that free Negroes should be enlisted; that slaves would be enlisted with the consent of their owners; or without their owners' consent "if it were necessary for the purposes of the Government" provided the owners received just compensation. Stanton on October 1, 1863 (ironi-

38th Congress, pt. I, 225–227, 633–634; Birney to the Adjutant General, August 20, 1863; C. W. Foster, Chief of the Bureau of Colored Troops, to Birney. September 9, 1863, NIMS, III, pt. 1, 1508–10, 1565.

5. NIMS, III, pt. 1, 1555–1557.

6. Clark, *Politics in Maryland*, pp. 99–114.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 65–72; Heinrich E. Buchholz, *Governors of Maryland . . .* (Baltimore, 1908), pp. 178–183.

8. Bradford to Austin W. Blair, September 11, 1863, NIMS, III, pt. 1, 1568.

cally on the same day that Lincoln suspended recruitment), expressed the belief that it was necessary to draft Negroes in Maryland, for it was the center of the war in the East. Surveying the situation, Stanton reported to Lincoln, "There is therefore, in my judgment, a military necessity, in the State of Maryland . . . , for enlisting into the forces all persons capable of bearing arms on the union side without regard to color, and whether they be free or not."⁹

Lincoln quickly approved the recommendations of Stanton, but with two provisos which illustrated the care with which he wanted recruitment conducted in Maryland. Lincoln asserted succinctly: "To recruiting of slaves of loyal owners without consent, objection, unless the necessity is urgent. To conducting offensively, while recruiting, and to carrying away slaves not suitable for recruits, objection."¹⁰ On October 3, 1863, the War Department in General Orders No. 329 set up regulations for recruiting free Negroes and slaves in Missouri, Tennessee, and Maryland. Under this order the Chief of the Bureau of Colored Troops received authority to establish recruiting offices in Maryland where free Negroes and slaves, with their masters' consent, could be enlisted. If county quotas were not filled in thirty days, slaves would be enlisted without their masters' consent. All loyal masters whose slaves were taken or who consented to their enlistment could receive as much as \$300.00 compensation upon filing a deed of manumission. When slaves enlisted the owner would receive a descriptive list of each of his slaves and certificates of enlistment. Rolls and recruiting lists were to be made public and anyone showing proof of ownership and loyalty within ten days after the posting of the announcement could present his claim to a commission to be established for that purpose.¹¹

On its surface General Orders 329 indicated firm resolve, in the face of adverse public opinion, on the part of Union officials. However, the Lincoln administration had not resolutely determined its course, for this order was "confidential, and not promulgated with the general series of order."¹² As late as October 19, 1863, the War Department continued to refrain from issuing a public announcement that slaves were to be enlisted. The order was not promulgated, in all probability, because of the earnest appeal of Governor Bradford that it be delayed in order to allow time for discussion and the dissipation of prejudice on the subject of Negro enlistment in Maryland.¹³ Stanton deferred enforcing the order until the end of October and then he moved forward vigorously and efficaciously to set up the recruiting system in Maryland. On October 26, 1863, he appointed Hugh L. Bond,

9. Stanton to Lincoln, October 1, 1863, *ibid.*, 1642-44.

10. Lincoln to Stanton, *ibid.*, 1644.

11. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, January 5, 1864.

12. Editor's Note, NIMS, III, pt. 1, 1656.

13. Bradford to Stanton, October 3, 1863; Foster to Birney, October 19, 1863, *ibid.*, III, pt. 1, 1652-53, 1683.

Thomas Timmons and L. E. Straughn as members of the Maryland Board to award compensation to loyal owners. The Board granted a claim of \$100 for slaves owing to their masters at the time of enlistment more than three years and less than five years service, \$200 for services of more than five years and less than ten, and \$300 for slaves owing more than ten years service or life.¹⁴ Circular No. 1, October 26, 1863, from the Bureau of Colored Troops established nineteen recruiting stations for colored troops in Maryland, thus systematizing colored troop recruitment.¹⁵

When the War Department established a definite system, recruiting agents, under the direction of William Birney until February 12, 1864, and subsequently under Colonel S. M. Bowman, 84th Pennsylvania Volunteers, entered energetically upon their work. Armed Negro troops went out to obtain recruits and to protect those who wished to join. Recruiting officers held public meetings to change public opinion and to attract colored recruits. In addition, the recruiters had a Negro band which they used in parades and performances in efforts to entice Negroes into the army.¹⁶ Some persons, primarily slaveholders, alleged that the recruiting officers forced Negroes to enlist, often threatening to shoot them if they did not. The officers answered these allegations by stating that they always obtained the will of the Negro before he enlisted, and further, that they had frequently refused the request of masters "to take by force their slaves, whom they could not make work, and wished to put into service."¹⁷ If an owner claimed a Negro had been impressed, Birney would ask the recruit, in the presence of the owner, if he wished to return; the slave always refused to return to the plantation. On the other hand, the other commissioner for the recruitment of colored troops, S. M. Bowman, admitted that he had impressed Negroes. Late in April, 1864, Bowman reported, "No recruits can be had unless I send detachments to particular localities and compel them to volunteer as I have done in many instances heretofore."¹⁸

Whether recruiting agents impressed Negroes, or convinced them to enlist by the use of patriotic appeals, they were thorough in their work. On March 15, 1864, Colonel S. M. Bowman received authorization to send his officers to "jails, slave-pens or other places of confinement . . . to enlist all colored men found in such

14. *Ibid.*, III, pt. 1, 1699, Captain Le Grand Benedict, A. A. G., to Foster, October 10, 1864, Letterbook of U. S. Colored Troops, I, 31–32, AGO, RG94, NA.

15. Some of the stations were: Baltimore, Chestertown, Oxford, Havre de Grace, Benedict, Lower Marlboro, Hagerstown, Queenstown, Monocacy, Leonardtown, and Annapolis, *Appleton's Annual Cyclopedias*, 1863 (42 vols., New York, 1863–1903), III, 615.

16. General Orders, No. 70, February 12, 1864; Foster to Birney, February 26, 1864, NIMS, IV, 2379, 2397.

17. Birney to the Adjutant General, February 4, 1864; Bradford to Lincoln, May 12, 1864 (enclosures), *ibid.*, IV, 2358, 2534–38; *Appleton's Annual Cyclopedias*, 1864, IV, 496.

18. Bowman to Foster, April 29, 1864, NIMS, IV, 2521.

places." No man could enlist unless he passed a surgeon's examination and provided "none so enlisted are held under criminal process."¹⁹ By this move, the recruiters sought to circumvent the efforts of slaveholders to keep their slaves from enlisting by incarcerating them. The officers rejected a large number of slaves for physical reasons, and when, or if, they returned home their masters abused them. To alleviate this lugubrious situation the War Department instituted the practice of enlisting disabled Negroes, transferring them to a Staff Department and mustering them out, thus making them free and giving them a job.²⁰

Natives of Maryland perceived the recruitment of Negroes with mixed emotions which varied with each section. Many Marylanders agreed with Congressman Benjamin G. Harris, Democrat, that it was a "degradation" of the Nation and the flag to call upon Negroes to defend it.²¹ Many of the Provost Marshals resigned when slaves were enrolled "because they were required to enroll white and 'colored' together . . . one enrolling officer in Montgomery County, on taking his lists home at night had them burned by his indignant wife."²² As a result of the large number of free and prosperous Negroes and the relatively small (4,487) number of slaveholders, according to recruiters, opinion was favorable to the enlistment of Negroes on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay.²³ There were some rebel sympathizers who called for armed resistance but they were not widely supported. Nevertheless, demagogues were vociferous enough to compel Lincoln to halt recruiting of Negroes in October, 1863.

The equivocation of the Lincoln administration did much to sustain resistance to the recruitment of Negroes. Hugh L. Bond and others believed that if Lincoln had proclaimed in a forthright manner that the government needed the slaves, all objections to their use would have vanished quickly. The objections eventually vanished because the poor whites saw the enlistment of the Negro as their salvation from the draft, while a large number of slaveholders saw the enlistment of slaves, with compensation, as a way to get something out of "property" that would have soon been expropriated. However, by October 10, 1864, the slaveholders had received only \$14,391 for their enlisted slaves and many of them were chagrined at the reluctance of the War Department to pay their claims. On February 1, 1865, Congressman John A. Creswell, Unionist, representing the First District, introduced a resolution inquiring into the payment of the claims of slave

19. General Orders, No. 11, 8th Army Corps., *ibid.*, IV, 2431.

20. Foster to Bowman, June 17, 1864, *ibid.*, IV, 2632; Bradford to Colonel James B. Fry, Provost Marshal General, May 9, 1864, O. R., Series 3, IV, 279, 280.

21. *Congressional Globe*, 1st Session, 38th Congress, pt. I, 597-598.

22. Captain J. C. Holland, Provost Marshal, 5th District, to Fry, June 12, 1865, NIMS, VI, 3660-64.

23. Clark, *Eastern Shore*, I, 514-515, 552; John Frazier, Jr., Provost Marshal, to Stanton, September 21, 1863; Birney to the Adjutant General, January 26, 1864, NIMS, III, pt. I, 1593-94; IV, 2338.

owners in an effort to prod the War Department into paying them. On the other hand, the abolition element visualized, in the enlistment of Negroes, not profit but the death knell of slavery.²⁴ The slaveholding element on the Western Shore offered the stiffest resistance to the recruitment of slaves. It was on the Western Shore, near Benedict, that two slaveholders murdered Lieutenant Eben White, 7th U. S. C. T, while he was recruiting for his regiment. The implacable "Colonel" John H. Sothoron, former State Senator and member of the Maryland House of Delegates, and his son shot White as he attempted to enlist some of the Sothoron slaves and then escaped into Confederate lines. Lincoln became quite upset over the murder of White because it represented the animosity held toward his policy in Maryland.²⁵

Once launched upon a program of enlisting slaves the state government cooperated with the administration to fill Maryland's quota. On February 6, 1864, the legislature passed a law authorizing the governor to pay anyone enlisting except Negro slaves, before March 1, 1864, \$300 bounty in addition to the United States bounty. One hundred and fifty dollars would be paid at the enlistee's muster in and twenty dollars per month for the first five months thereafter and fifty dollars at the end of his three year service. To any person re-enlisting \$325 would be paid the same as above with seventy-five dollars at the end of his service. To each slaveowner who agreed to enlist his slave, one hundred dollars would be paid to the owner, in addition to the \$300 he would receive from the National Government, and fifty dollars to the slave when he enlisted and fifty when he was mustered out. If a person died in service, the remainder of his bounty would go to his wife or children, "Provided: that if said wife or children be a slave or slaves the same unpaid balance shall revert to the State."²⁶

Doubtless, the lucrative bounties attracted many Negroes to Union arms. However, many of them found that they could not rely on being paid, or they were not paid as quickly as white troops. To aid them the War Department refused to give descriptive or enlistment lists or accept the claims for slaves unless the slave had received the state bounty.²⁷ Some of the slaves refused to join the service when they saw that recruiting officers gave descriptive lists (which they thought represented bills of sale) to their masters. Many slaves donned the accouterments of war because they hoped, by doing so, to throw off the manacles of slavery. The large number of free Negroes in Maryland, to whom the army did not offer such

24. L. C. Benedict to Foster, October 10, 1864, Letterbook U.S. Colored Troops, I, 31-32; *Congressional Globe*, 2nd Session, 38th Congress, pt. I, 539.

25. Lincoln to Schenck (telegram) October 22, 1863, NIMS, III, pt. 1, 1692; *Baltimore Daily Gazette*, October 22 and 24, 1863.

26. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, February 8, 1864.

27. Foster to S. M. Bowman, June 7, 1864; Foster to S. F. Streeter, June 8, 1864, Letterbook U.S. Colored Troops, II, 734, 739-40.

boons as freedom and money, expressed less enthusiasm than slaves for army life. Moreover, many of the wealthy free Negroes, as did their white counterparts, furnished substitutes when they were drafted.²⁸ When a Maryland convention provided for the emancipation of slaves by November 1, 1864, even the slaves lost some of their desire to enlist.²⁹ Inequality of pay between white and colored union troops served to dampen the ardor of both slave and free Negro. However, one Negro probably expressed the view of most Maryland Negroes when he reportedly prayed:

Great Doctor ob doctors, King ob Kings and God ob battles help us to be well. Help us to be able to fight wid de union sojers de battles for de Union. Help us to fight for de country—fight for our own homes and our own free children and our children's children.³⁰

The "God ob battles" inspired more than 8,718 Maryland Negroes to volunteer to serve in six regiments that participated in some of the most trying engagements of the war—the siege of Petersburg and Richmond and at Appomattox—and generally to acquit themselves with honor.³¹

28. *Baltimore Daily Gazette*, October 30, December 11 and 15, 1863.

29. Foster to Bowman, October 31, 1864, Letters Sent, III, 2832, Colored Troops Division, AGO, RG94, NA.

30. *Baltimore Daily Gazette*, October 23, 1868.

31. A. Briscoe Koger, *The Maryland Negro in Our Wars* (Baltimore, 1942), p. 8; Harold R. Manakee, *Maryland in the Civil War* (Baltimore, 1961), pp. 124-27.

Comment

John Blassingame was one of the first scholars to examine the history of slavery from the viewpoint of the slaves. His *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South*, first published in 1972, inspired a whole generation of slavery historians. He also made substantial contributions as an editor, producing *Slave Testimony*, a collection of slaves' writings, and editing *The Frederick Douglass Papers*.

In a 1963 article here reprinted, Blassingame explored the complexities of recruiting black soldiers in Maryland during the Civil War. His account focused on the political importance the Lincoln administration attached to Maryland, the status of slavery within the Union, and to recruiting black soldiers in winning the Civil War. The author illustrated the clashes that Lincoln's men encountered with Maryland unionists and defenders of slavery, respectively. Blassingame also elucidated the different perspectives on black recruitment by region within the state but had comparatively little to say, given his later interests, about the attitudes of slaves or free people of color.

Subsequent studies have amply filled that gap. Barbara Fields's *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland During the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985) offers a fine overview of slavery's demise in Maryland. Fields also participated in the Freedmen and Southern Society Project, which produced *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation* (four volumes to date), with editors Ira Berlin, Leslie Rowland, Joseph Reidy, and others. Readers may be interested in *Free at Last* (NY: The New Press, 1992), a fat, one-volume version of the series, containing a host of interesting documents about Maryland slaves, free people of color, and their roads to freedom. For those who want to know more about the politics that Blassingame sketched in this article, Jean H. Baker's *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Political Parties from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) remains the standard. For a comparative look, see Frank Towers' intriguing new book, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004).

Taken together, this body of work shows, as John Blassingame understood, the crucial role of Maryland and its enslaved population in the fateful Civil War era.

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The Maryland Germans in the Civil War

DIETER CUNZ

Some writers consider the conflict between the North and the South which led to the Civil War in 1861 as resulting from the divergence of a democratic and an aristocratic republic. When seen from this point of view, there could be for the majority of German immigrants during the nineteenth century no doubt whatever as to which side they ought to join. In the decades after 1815, the age of the restoration and of the Holy Alliance, as well as during the years following the abortive revolution of 1848, many Germans had come to America because of their dislike of the conservative and even reactionary course of German government, and these liberals, after having undergone all the difficulties and hardships of emigration, would scarcely feel inclined, now that they were on this side of the Atlantic, to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the aristocratic landowners of the South. The concept of slavery stood in the sharpest contrast to their liberal and progressive ideas. Naturally they knew nothing of the specifically American background, the economic conditions, which for a certain period had made slavery understandable and pardonable; what they did observe was the horror of slavery as judged from the standpoint of their ideals and theories.

The constitutional aspects of this struggle left the Germans cold. Older Americans were influenced—frequently in favor of the South—by the fact that the conflict hinged, among other things, also on the question as to whether the individual State could act as it pleased or whether it had to surrender important rights to the federal government. German immigrants of the nineteenth century cared little about “states’ rights”; in fact they tended to oppose them because they appeared as a parallel to the splitting up of the nation into numerous petty states, a phenomenon that had proved baneful in the course of German history. For them the United States was an entity; it made no difference to them whether they lived in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, or Texas—so long as they could live according to the ideals for the preservation of which they had undertaken the long journey into a foreign land.

There were, in addition, purely economic motives to win these Germans to the side of the North. In general, the Southern plantation owners were opposed to immigration. They had no conception of the high cultural value of European

*This article first appeared in volume 36 (1941). The author (1910–1969), a German immigrant, taught at the University of Maryland College Park before moving on to Ohio State University. He is best remembered for his seminal work, *The Maryland Germans: A History*, published in 1948.*

immigration. The economic system of the South did not require new blood, for its principle was mass production by unskilled labor. The social structure in the South had a relatively small top level: there were only about 2300 large plantations with slave populations numbering between 100 and 1000.¹ The middle class was very small and quite insignificant. Hence there was no social sphere except in the cities in which a German immigrant might win a position for himself. Precisely for the small farmer of German stock who contributed so much to the winning of the West there was no room in the economic system of the South. This was also true for the new territory of the Southwestern states, just opening up at this time. Every sensible farmer knew that his laboriously conquered farm land would lose enormously in value if next door to it a Negro plantation could be established.

These idealistic, practical, and emotional causes constitute the main explanation (although of course there were various minor reasons) why the majority of the Germans in America joined the side of the North in the Civil War. This attitude not only brought new allies to the cause of the Union, but ultimately proved extremely useful also for the Germans.² The Forty-Eighters who had fled because of the German Revolution at first considered their stay in America as strictly temporary. Only reluctantly did they learn English, and did little or nothing to acquaint themselves with American conditions; there seemed no reason to do so, since they hoped shortly to return to the Republic of Germany. Carl Schurz was one of the very few to follow a different course. A large majority considered the sojourn on these shores as an ephemeral matter and the keynote of their relationship to the new country was a tone of carping criticism toward everything. This sterile, negative attitude was the reason why most of them, far from progressing materially and intellectually, found themselves in a sort of blind alley. When, after a few years, they became aware that they would have to establish themselves permanently in this country, because there was not the slightest chance for the revival of liberal ideas in Germany, their despair and gloom were great since they considered the fight for their ideals a total loss. Furthermore, most of them had by this time exhausted their financial reserves without having gained any footing in the social or economic structure of America.

At this very time, around the year 1854, when the danger of moral and intellectual decay was greatest for the Forty-Eighters, the anti-slavery struggle entered its final and decisive phase. There was thus opened up an entirely new and welcome field of activity for liberal German hot-heads. The old humanitarian ideals they had vainly fought to realize in their Fatherland could now be fitted into the scheme of current American politics. This helped them to get out of the rut of

1. A. E. Parkins, *The South: Its Economic-Geographic Development* (New York, 1935), p. 206.

2. Cf. Wilhelm Kaufmann, *Die Deutschen im amerikanischen Burgerkrieg* (München, 1911), pp. 101 ff.

emigrant cliques: through their agitation against slavery they got into touch for the first time with the American people and American conditions, and learned to know, to love, and to struggle for their adopted country. The significance of the anti-slavery movement for the Forty-Eighters lies in the fact that a burning question of current American politics touched the very core of their natures, and enabled them to find a bridge leading from the dry ideas and theories of their past to a responsible, useful activity in the present.

This explanation refers particularly, of course, to the North and the northern part of the Middle West. The only Atlantic State south of the Mason and Dixon Line in which the ideals of the Forty-Eighters were carried over into American politics and played a part in the decision of the Civil War was Maryland.³

Since Maryland lies on the border line between North and South, the attitude there toward the issues of 1860 was far from unanimous. This State reflected in a microcosm as it were, the picture of the situation as it existed in the entire country. The plantation owners in the southern part of the State with their tobacco culture, stood opposed to the independent farmers of the northern or northwestern counties who raised grain and cattle. Between these two parts lay the only metropolis of the State, Baltimore, which belonged economically to the North due to its great industrial development, but socially and intellectually was very closely linked with the South.

In the South it was taken for granted that Maryland was Democratic and favorably inclined toward secession. Everyone in the South believed that the State would join the Confederacy as soon as Confederate troops entered its territory. This proved to be true only in part. It was doubtless the case regarding the southern counties and the Eastern Shore. In Western Maryland, however, the Confederates experienced on their first visit in 1862 the annoying surprise that feeling was definitely divided and favored in considerable majority allegiance to the Union. The two counties which most energetically opposed secession were Frederick and Washington, that is, the very counties that contained the oldest and largest settlements of German stock.

To be sure, seen from the point of view of party politics, this region also was Democratic; in the election of 1860 there was but a small scattering of votes for Lincoln.⁴ The press of this region expressed frank regret concerning Lincoln's election, but was far from considering this a cause for secession. A big Union meeting was held in Frederick, on December 15, 1860, which was followed a few days later

3. For the special situation of the Germans in Texas, see Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1940), pp. 417 ff.

4. The results of the voting in Washington County were: Bell 2567, Breckenridge 2475, Douglas 283, Lincoln 95. Thomas J. C. Williams, *History of Washington County, Maryland* (Hagerstown, 1906), p. 304. In Frederick County: Bell 3617, Breckenridge and Douglas 3609, Lincoln 103. T. J. C. Williams, *History of Frederick County, Maryland* (Frederick, 1910), p. 364.

by a big county meeting "for the preservation of the Union."⁵ The names of the leading men at these meetings show that they were of good old Maryland-German stock: Haller, Eberts, Baer, Biser, Boteler, Cramer, Eichelberger, Brengle. Similar meetings were also organized in Hagerstown after the election and after the outbreak of the War, and we find among the most ardent fighters for the Union men called Daniel Weisel, Daniel Startzmann, and Henry Dellinger—all purely German names.⁶ Indeed, it was a descendant of an old German family who after Lincoln's call for troops in 1861 organized the first regiment of soldiers from Frederick County: Captain B. H. Schley, who was later advanced to the rank of major.⁷ Thomas E. Mittag, of German descent, was the owner of the Western Maryland paper which stood most emphatically for the preservation of the Union—*The Herald and Torchlight* of Hagerstown. It invariably referred to the Confederacy as "the hellish rebellion" and frequently expressed the view that the steps undertaken by Lincoln's government against the secessionists were far too feeble.⁸

Naturally enough in these two "German counties" there can be found German names also among the minority sympathetic toward the South. In Hagerstown a Colonel George Schley belonged to the leaders of the Peace Party, which consisted almost exclusively of camouflaged secessionists.⁹ The organ of this Peace Party, *The Hagerstown Mail*, was edited by Daniel Dechert, a man of pure Pennsylvania German stock. His articles, no less violent than those of the *Herald*, led to his arrest and a jail sentence of six weeks.¹⁰ After this his tone became somewhat gentler, but not sufficiently conciliatory for the Unionists, for in the course of an anti-secessionist riot the office of the *Mail* was attacked and plundered.¹¹ From Middletown, Maryland, comes the report of an enduring enmity between two German families, the Riddlemosers and the Grouses, the one in sympathy with the North and the other with the South.¹² In general, the attitude of Western Maryland was pro-Union.¹³

5. Williams, *Frederick County*, pp. 364 ff.

6. Williams, *Washington County*, p. 306. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Western Maryland* (Philadelphia, 1882), p. 216. Other German names appearing at different Union meetings in Hagerstown, Keedysville, Middletown (all in Western Maryland) were: Spigler, Sprecker, Kitzmiller, Rohner, Christmann, Lantz, Ecker, Christ, Hoppe.—Cf. Scharf, *op. cit.*, pp. 197 ff.

7. This Frederick regiment fought throughout the entire course of the war.

8. Williams, *Washington County*, p. 307. A striking sentence characterizing the attitude of this paper during the year 1860: "It is our duty as Southern men to hold back secession until the sober thought of the North can be put into operation for the preservation of the Union."

9. Williams, *Washington County*, p. 304.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 324.

12. J. H. Apple, "The Border Woman," in *The Pennsylvania German*, XI (1910), 300 ff.

13. Abdel R. Wentz, *History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Frederick Maryland* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1938), pp. 233 ff.—The municipal election in Cumberland shows clearly the steady

The story of Barbara Fritchie, who, according to Whittier, fearlessly hung out the Union flag in the face of the Confederate troops, is certainly rather legendary than historical, yet it characterizes in a striking way the prevailing mood of Frederick.¹⁴ A quotation from the memoirs of the most famous German soldier on the Southern side, Colonel Heros von Borcke, is very illuminating. He relates that during the days when Confederate troops were in Western Maryland he was at one time observing some Germans who were sitting in an inn, smoking and drinking. "I am quite sure that most of them were decided Yankee sympathizers, but as a gray uniform was right among them, and many others not far off they talked the hottest secession."¹⁵ Though this testimonial is not altogether flattering to the Germans in Frederick, it shows clearly that even the Confederates had no longer the slightest doubt regarding the Union sympathies of the Germans in Western Maryland.

Some quotations from an unpublished diary of Jacob Engelbrecht (1819–1878), a German inhabitant of Frederick, may illustrate the feelings of the German element in the western counties. On November 17, 1860, Engelbrecht wrote: "As soon as the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency was known, the South Carolinians & Allabamans were ready to secede [sic] from the Union of the U. States and at this time they are making wonderful preparation to leave this glorious Union. For my own part I say go as quick as you please . . . the sooner they go the better for the peace & quiet of our Country." On December 21, 1860, after the secession of South Carolina, we read: "Thank you, Gentlemen, you have been dominating long enough, and I hope you will stay out of the Union." On April 11, 1861, we find the remark: "I hope Uncle Sam (or rather now Uncle Abe) will give the seceding boys a good sound drubbing. The Constitution and the laws must be sustained."¹⁶

A further proof of the fidelity to the Union cause of the western counties can be derived from an examination of the exciting history of the Maryland legislature at the beginning of the War. Senator Radcliffe has described in detail the

increase of the Union party in Allegany County. The same thing is proved by the election to the Maryland legislature of the Unionist delegate Fiery from Washington County. George L. P. Radcliffe, *Governor Thomas H. Hicks of Maryland and the Civil War* (Johns Hopkins Studies, Baltimore, 1901), p. 94.

14. Barbara Fritchie (1766–1862) was the daughter of a German, Nicholas Hauer and wife, nee Catherine Zeiler. Hauer emigrated to Pennsylvania in 1754 and in 1770 settled in Frederick. *National Cyclopedie of American Biography* (1909), Vol. X, p. 113. Williams, *Frederick County*, p. 378. *The Pennsylvania German*, IV (1903), 339 ff.; J. H. Apple, "Barbara Fritchie," *Pennsylvania German*, VIII (1907), 366 ff.; *New York Times*, December 4, 1927; *Baltimore Sun*, January 17, 1937.

15. Heros von Borcke, *Memoirs of the Confederate War of Independence* (New York, 1938), I, p. 190.

16. Quoted from an unpublished Johns Hopkins University dissertation by George A. Douglas, "An Economic History of Frederick County, Maryland, to 1860" (Baltimore, 1938), pp. 35–42. The original orthography of Jacob Engelbrecht is reproduced.

policy of the then governor, Thomas H. Hicks, his "masterly inactivity" shown by long hesitation in summoning the legislature, because he wished to prevent all hasty or anti-Union resolutions. When Hicks finally did call the legislators together he summoned them to Frederick because of the well-known pro-Union attitude of this town, as he himself explained at the time.¹⁷ The legislature, meeting on April 26, 1861, held its first meeting in the Frederick County Court House, but moved then for all subsequent meetings to the German Reformed Church, corner of Church and Market Streets.¹⁸ Even before the legislature convened in Frederick, the Home Guard of Frederick had been founded, often called after its organizer, Captain Alfred F. Brengle, the "Brengle Home Guard." The name Brengle leaves no doubt concerning the German descent of its owner, and the list of members contains so many German names—about half of the 400 names—that lack of space does not permit us to mention them. This Brengle Guard had been founded to espouse the cause of the Union in Western Maryland and was supported by the citizens of Frederick.¹⁹

Except for the western counties, Frederick and Washington, the city of Baltimore had then—just as it has today—the largest percentage of Germans or descendants of Germans. But the situation there was slightly different. The Germans in Western Maryland had at the beginning of the War no love whatever for Lincoln because they were loyal Democrats, but, as I have said, they, for the most part, favored the Union. In Baltimore, party politics further were complicated by a new angle. There was published here the only Republican paper in the State of Maryland; the only one in Maryland to advocate openly and energetically the election of Lincoln: the German daily, *Der Wecker*. There is no need here to say much about its founder, Carl Heinrich Schnauffer,²⁰ particularly since he died only three years after he had founded the paper, in 1854. But his family continued the paper in his spirit and the *Wecker* maintained the attitude of its founder, the liberal Forty-Eighter who had fought in Germany against tyrants and the rule by princes. Here can be seen clearly, as we mentioned above, that the younger generation of German immigrants of the fifties conceived of the Civil War as a continuation of the struggle of 1848.²¹

17. Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 69. Frederick and Baltimore were designated by Lincoln in his call for troops in April, 1861, as the two places in Maryland where troops were to be mustered into service.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

19. *Maryland Historical Magazine*, VII (1912), 196 ff.

20. Cf. A. E. Zucker, "Carl Heinrich Schnauffer," in *Twenty-fourth Report of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland* (1939), pp. 17 ff.

21. An appeal by Leonard Streiff to his German fellow-citizens (*Wecker*, June 18, 1861) shows this plainly; he states that the same principles were and are involved in the Europe of 1848 and the America of 1861. An address delivered at a *Turner* festival in Berlin in 1861 harks back to an even earlier point in German history. In welcoming representatives of American Turner soci-

As a Republican paper the *Wecker* advocated the freeing of the slaves unconditionally. It returned to this question again and again. It was well aware how difficult this problem was and that the abolition of slavery would by no means establish the equality before the law of the Negroes. After emancipation there should come education for the colored folk. "The negroes ought to become whatever they can make of themselves"²²—but they must be given the *opportunity* to make something of themselves. True emancipation cannot be attained by law, it must grow historically; freeing the Negroes from slavery must be followed by legal, political and social emancipation. It would not be right to tax the negroes without giving them the vote, for taxation without representation was the injustice that drove the Colonies to revolution in 1776.²³ To be sure, when compared to the radical abolitionist New England sheets the *Wecker* appears decidedly moderate. In reply to some complaints from readers that the *Wecker* did not attack the slavery question with sufficient energy, the editor replied that he must perforce impose moderation on himself since the paper was being published in a slave State and that he could not willfully endanger the only progressive organ in Maryland; he would prefer to win over to his side fellow citizens who were still undecided in their attitude, rather than rebuff them by violent fanaticism.²⁴ Shortly afterward he took sharp issue with some bigoted abolitionists, when he argued that their plan to send the Negroes back to Africa after their liberation did not spring from a feeling of humanity but from arrogance and intolerance. These people were eager to free the slaves but after that they never wished to see them again. Such a course would prove impossible. It was nonsense to call them "Africans," for they were Africans just as little as Lincoln was a European. The Negroes were Americans, they formed the lowest class of agricultural laborers, and as such they had a right to their position in the American economic system as much as anyone else, regardless of color or race.²⁵

Though the *Wecker* at times showed a conciliatory spirit regarding the question of slavery, in regard to Lincoln it proved all the more absolute and adamant. It never felt the slightest doubt that Old Abe was the best man in the country. This

ties the orator assured them of his sympathy in their fight against barbarism and went on to state that the year 1861 represents for German-American *Turner* the same crucial test in the fight for freedom that 1813 had meant for German *Turner*. (*Ibid.*, July 18, 1861).

22. "More Schools for the Negroes," *Ibid.*, June 22, 1865.

23. *Ibid.*, June 22, 1865. The fact that Professor W. C. F. Walther in the *Lutheraner* published in St. Louis, defended slavery on the basis of his interpretation of some Biblical passages as well as citations from the works of some Reformation leaders is eagerly seized upon and castigated by the *Wecker*. This is part and parcel of the anti-clerical attitude of this as well as most papers conducted by Forty-Eighters. *Ibid.*, January 14, 1864.

24. *Ibid.*, July 4, 1860.

25. *Ibid.*, December 7, 1861.

is all the more noteworthy since the *Wecker* and the *Turner* paper were the only ones in Maryland at the time taking this point of view. Originally the *Wecker*, like most German papers, had been more inclined to favor Seward. When on May 16, 1860, the paper presented to its readers the ten men who came in question for the Republican nomination, Lincoln—in contrast to Seward and Wade—was mentioned only briefly and not very hopefully. He was characterized curtly as “America’s greatest debater, witty and original.” But two days later, after Lincoln had been nominated, the *Wecker* did all it could to strengthen Lincoln’s position in Baltimore and on the day of Lincoln’s visit to Baltimore it extended to him a cordial greeting.²⁶ The paper printed in full every one of Lincoln’s messages, in 1864 it came forward as one of the first to advocate his reelection, and on the day after his assassination it appeared in mourning with a wide black margin.²⁷ When some German Republicans attacked Lincoln because his administration seemed not sufficiently energetic, the *Wecker* defended the President’s deliberate hesitation.²⁸ When the same group complained regarding a rebuff Carl Schurz had received as a member of the new cabinet the *Wecker* came forward with conciliatory explanations. It reported with evident pleasure how Lincoln had expressed himself in an interview regarding the Germans, stating that he appreciated them as “straight-forward, honest people,” that he regretted that he could not talk with them in German, but that one of his secretaries was regularly translating for him clippings from German papers for he was very much interested to know what the Germans in America thought about him.²⁹

The *Wecker* was in full accord with Governor Hicks because it came to realize very quickly that the hesitant policy of this statesman was quite favorable to the Union cause.³⁰ In view of this the *Wecker* even forgave Governor Hicks his old association with the Know-Nothings, even though at regular intervals it continued to attack in the sharpest terms this as well as other nativistic groups. “It is wrong to say that adopted citizens should keep aloof from the quarrel. They are citizens and as such they must take their place—for the preservation of the Union.”³¹

“Preservation of the Union” was the chief slogan of the *Wecker* throughout the years of the Civil War. It warned the Germans in Virginia, “Within the Union

26. *Ibid.*, November 1, 1860, and February 23, 1861.

27. *Ibid.*, June 13, 1864, and April 15, 1865.

28. *Ibid.*, April 5, 1861.

29. *Ibid.*, January 31, 1861.

30. *Ibid.*, January 2 and 8, 1861. Similarly the *Turnzeitung* called Governor Hicks a “white raven” and defended his policy (January 10, 1860). The Democratic *Deutsche Correspondent*, however, was against Hicks, “the Know-Nothing man,” all the more so since it lumped together the Know-Nothings and the New England Puritans, identifying both with Governor Hicks. *Correspondent*, January 14, 1858.

31. *Wecker*, June 2, 1861.

happy, outside the Union unhappy." ³² For this very reason the *Wecker* showed such great interest in the events in West Virginia and did everything to strengthen the anti-secessionist position of this State.³³ Once the war had gotten under way, it demanded that it be fought to the end for the sake of the Union. "No talk of peace now," it exclaimed in August, 1861, "that would be too soon. A peace concluded now would not serve the Union cause."³⁴

These quotations probably characterize sufficiently the attitude of Baltimore's German Republican paper. What about its Democratic counterpart, the *Deutsche Correspondent*? The *Correspondent* had been founded in 1841 by Friedrich Raine, a German immigrant. It is characteristic of the founder as well as of the paper that both adapted themselves very rapidly to the American milieu. The *Correspondent* was the first German paper in the United States to adopt the make-up of the American press. Raine himself was already firmly planted in the life of this country and quite acclimatized when in 1851 Carl Heinrich Schnauffer, the founder of the *Wecker*, came to Baltimore, filled with the liberal ideology of the Revolution of 1848. Raine had been moving in the Democratic atmosphere of the State of Maryland for fully twenty years before the Civil War broke out; naturally enough he had become rooted in the Democratic party, and he never left it. Thus he and his *Correspondent* took their attitude toward the current events on the basis of the Democratic party position.³⁵

The volumes of the *Correspondent* from the Civil War years are unfortunately not preserved. We must attempt to supply this lack from a secondary source and from items in the later volumes of the paper, as when on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary the attitude of the *Correspondent* toward the Civil War is retrospectively outlined and explained.³⁶ The *Correspondent* did not openly advocate secession; among a hundred German papers in America in 1860 only three favored secession.³⁷ Regarding the slavery question, the *Correspondent* took an essentially different position from that of the *Wecker*. To be sure, the *Correspondent* did not go so far as to praise and defend slavery as a divine institution. "In our state there was probably not one adopted citizen who was a slave-owner, not one who did not consider negro slavery a regrettable institution within a free republic, but" — there was the Constitution and the *Correspondent* always took refuge in this sacred document. Maryland happened to be a slave State and "one must never for-

32. *Ibid.*, January 28, 1861.

33. *Ibid.*, April 12, 1861.

34. *Ibid.*, August 31, 1861.

35. Cf. Edmund E. Miller, *The Hundred Year History of the German Correspondent* (Baltimore, 1941), pp. 9 ff.

36. *Correspondent*, May 13, 1891.

37. Lonn, *op. cit.*, p. 46. The *Correspondent* was opposed to all tendencies that favored a centralization of the government. Yet it did not concede the South the right of secession, because it held that a State can leave the Union only with the consent of all.

get that the Constitution of the United States in support of which every adopted citizen of the Republic has sworn an oath of loyalty sanctions and protects the institution of slavery." It was not the stubbornness of the Southern slave barons that had caused the trouble, but the greed of the northern Yankees.³⁸ "If the humanitarianism of the North could have persuaded itself in the interest of human kindness to purchase the freedom of the three million slaves in the South at only \$600 a head, an arrangement with which the Southern States in 1857 would probably have been satisfied, then a financial sacrifice of 1,800 million dollars could have prevented the Civil War, which cost far more than 2,500 million dollars plus vast numbers of human lives and tears!—The *Correspondent* can point with pride to the fact that it has recommended this possible compromise very urgently in a number of editorials." The Republican notions concerning the emancipation of the Negroes were treated with irony and mockery, at times even with cheap demagogic arguments. In the New Year's issue of 1866 the *Correspondent* demanded suffrage for white women who should really be considered much more important than Negroes. "Heaven and earth are set in motion to get the vote for four million freed Negro slaves and they forget the white women. Why should these fifteen million paragons of creation be less favored politically than the four million bowlegged and flat-nosed kinky-heads?" On another occasion, after a discussion of the vast loss of human life and property in the War, the paper said "For this triumph, we are eternally indebted to the British Abolitionists without whose efforts we should still find ourselves in the condition of barbarism which existed here before 1861."³⁹

This makes it readily understandable that during these years the *Correspondent* was none too fond of the great German-American Carl Schurz. It quoted Schurz as demanding that no State be readmitted to the Union before it had granted the vote to the Negroes, and commented that this demand was prompted by "purely party-politics." It held this to be on the same plane as the word of the Maryland politician, Henry Winter Davis, "What we need is votes, not intelligence." All these Republican maneuvers, it stated, had the one aim, namely, to get votes for the Republican party, since without the Negro votes of the South the Republican party of Mr. Carl Schurz would be lost. The *Correspondent* then asked menacingly: "How soon will the nation take a stand and expose these traitors in their true colors?"⁴⁰

While the *Wecker* always spoke with contempt and disgust of the "rebels" and the "slave barons of the South," the *Correspondent* had profound understanding for the difficult situation after the war of the former "insurgents" and "Southern

38. *Correspondent*, January 1, 1866: The Puritanical clergy of the North were to blame for the miserable Civil War. "What good can come from Massachusetts?" was a question the paper repeated again and again.

39. *Ibid.*, January 3, 1866.

40. *Ibid.*, January 6, 1866.

landowners."⁴¹ Their money had been swallowed up by the war, their soil was ruined, their property, i.e., the slaves, was now lost; in fact, the South could be saved only by means of generous loans on the part of Northern financiers. But the *Correspondent* had grave doubts as to whether "Yankee patriotism" would go so far. It held that Southern prosperity was essential to the welfare of the entire nation. The Government in Washington had not yet grasped the fact, for the unfortunate Freedman's Bureau,⁴² far from aiding the solution of the problem, was making it worse by egging on the Negroes⁴³ and thus was turning it into a purely political tool, the strategic center of the Republican party for the domination of the South.

Since the volumes from the early sixties are no longer extant we are not in position to learn anything about the attitude of the *Correspondent* toward Lincoln. We find some discussion however of President Buchanan. As late as 1891 the paper said of him that history had not yet accorded him justice, that writers still continued to minimize his merits, and that he had never neglected his duty of defending the Constitution.⁴⁴ This sounds quite different from the peppery articles of the *Wecker* on, or rather against, Buchanan, "that old sinner."⁴⁵ In the election campaign of 1860 the *Correspondent* as a matter of course supported Breckenridge, the candidate of Southern Democrats.

In one respect the *Correspondent* deviated from its usual course and this occurred whenever it turned to the discussion of European politics. In the course of a retrospective New Year's Day article the events of 1865, so unhappy for members of the Democratic party, suddenly took on a new constructive value. The editor called on the readers to be proud of this victory of a republic, for as such it would serve to strengthen republican tendencies in Europe.⁴⁶ Thus when there was a question of evaluating the republican United States against monarchistic Europe the *Correspondent* showed a sort of a "feeling of American solidarity" and, face to face with the thrones of European princes, the old party fights between Republicans and Democrats were forgotten.⁴⁷

41. *Ibid.*, January 6, 1866.

42. The purpose of this organization of the Federal Government was to aid Negroes in setting themselves up on small farms or in various trades.

43. Naturally enough the *Correspondent* mentioned every Negro uprising in the country, designating each as one more failure of the Republican party.

44. *Correspondent*, May 13, 1891.

45. On one occasion when a Cincinnati paper spoke of Buchanan's poor health the *Wecker* remarked savagely, "Buchanan, the old Billy-goat won't die so soon, as he is an extremely tough fellow for his age," (August 11, 1860). Naturally enough the *Turnzeitung* also viewed Buchanan extremely critically, "His course vacillated between love of peace and incitement to rebellion, truth and illusion, honesty and hypocrisy," (December 11, 1860).

46. January 3, 1866. The article is reprinted from the *New York Staatszeitung*, but without commentary, hence with the editor's approval.

47. Polemics between the two German papers occur rather rarely. Occasionally one finds in

The presidential election of 1860 was the first great political event in the history of the United States in which German *Turner* played an effective role. Five weeks before the Republican convention the associated *Turner* societies issued an appeal in the Baltimore *Turnzeitung* for the formation of local organizations for the purpose of exerting some influence on the course of the convention in Chicago.⁴⁸ In Baltimore, too, one of the leading *Turner*, Dr. George Edward Wiss, was closely associated with the early beginnings of the Republican party.⁴⁹ The first steps of the young Republican groups in Baltimore were not particularly fortunate. It stood completely under the influence of the Blair family, which was exerting its influence vigorously in the three border states, Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky, for the nomination of Edward Bates. Under the leadership of Dr. Wiss the German Republicans of Baltimore had joined the American Republican

the *Wecker* a few digs at the Democratic rival ("It is not at all ashamed of its incredible lies," *Wecker*, October 17, 1860). On November 15, 1860, the *Wecker* felt it its painful duty to report that the Baltimore *Correspondent* remained the only German paper still continuing with its attacks on the Republicans.

48. *Turnzeitung*, April 10, 1860. "We must have our own representatives on the spot lest we be treated as on former occasions when before the election we were called 'our German friends' and afterward 'the voting cattle' and then treated accordingly."

49. Despite considerable inquiries it has not been possible to learn much about George Edward Wiss (often called merely Edward Wiss). Requests for information addressed to the State Department and the National Archives have elicited the following facts: Dr. Wiss was born in Bavaria (probably in 1822), but became a naturalized citizen of Prussia. He immigrated to the United States in 1848 "with the full consent of the Prussian Government." Around 1852 he settled down in Baltimore as a practicing physician. He was also a prominent member of the *Turnverein*, from 1859 to 1861 one of the editors of the *Turnzeitung*, but in 1861 he resigned this post after a number of violent quarrels. He was a member of the executive committee appointed to look after the choice of the electoral ticket in 1860. In 1861 he applied for a consular post in Germany and was recommended by the Republican candidates for presidential electors of the City of Baltimore and the State of Maryland. According to the appointment records in the Department of State he was appointed American consul at Rotterdam, Netherlands, on June 5, 1861, (recess appointment) and on July 26, 1861, (confirmation appointment), and served from November 28, 1861, to August 29, 1866. (Cf. *Deutsche Amerikanische Turnerei*, I (1890) 91, and *New York Herald*, April 27, 1860, p. 10, col. 1.) In 1866 he applied for the position of minister resident at the Hague, but was not appointed. His official dispatches to the Department of State while consul at Rotterdam comprise about 400 manuscript pages. There are also on file in the National Archives his letters of application for positions and others recommending him. In E. F. Cordell's *Medical Annals of Maryland*, pp. 628-629, he receives only brief mention: "He was a regular graduate of a European medical school and sustained a satisfactory examination before your Board." (Report of the Board of Examiners of the Western Shore, June 1, 1850.) In the *Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office of the United States Army* XVI (1895), 514, two of his works are mentioned: *De tenotomia in universum*, 32 pp., Berolini, 1845 (obviously his doctoral dissertation written in Latin) and *The Healing and Prevention of Diphtheria* (Berlin, 1879), 37 pp.

Association, with the understanding that they be permitted to vote for Seward or some other equally prominent Republican. At the Maryland State Republican Convention which met in Baltimore April 26, 1860, with only about thirty delegates present there were some extremely turbulent scenes.⁵⁰ The adherents of Bates—according to the *Turnzeitung*, almost all of them former Know-Nothings—under the leadership of Montgomery Blair pushed through a vote to the effect that the eleven Maryland delegates to the Chicago convention were to vote as a group for Bates. This candidate, a judge from Missouri, was anathema to the Germans because in 1856 he had identified himself completely with the Whig platform, one plank of which aimed to increase the probationary period for immigrants from five to twenty-one years. Hence Dr. Wiss, the representative of the German Republicans of Baltimore, declared that he could not accept his appointment as alternate delegate to the convention. It would mean a vote contrary to his convictions and very poor representation of the German Republicans of Baltimore if he were to deliver an obligatory vote for Bates; therefore he would not go to the convention as a delegate, but he hoped to find ways and means of informing the convention regarding the position of the German Republicans.⁵¹ For a while the Germans planned to agitate violently against Bates, but then the latter's chances began to grow more and more hopeless anyway. Wiss was present at the Chicago convention, even though not as official delegate. He was the only representative from Maryland at a meeting held at the Deutsches Haus in Chicago May 15, 1860, at which the German Republicans agreed on the position they were to take. Some historians believe their united stand on the convention floor brought about the nomination of the "dark horse" candidate Abraham Lincoln.⁵² Even without the presence on the floor of Dr. Wiss, the Maryland delegates protested immediately against the instructions of the Blair clan to vote en bloc and insisted on voting individually.⁵³ Of German Republicans only one man took part in the convention, James F. Wagner, who became chairman of the executive committee of the Maryland Republican Party.⁵⁴ His name does not appear in any other record. Dr. Wiss, however, deserves considerable credit in helping to make impossible the candidacy of the reactionary Judge Bates and thus to clear the road for Lincoln's nomination.

At the next Republican Convention, held in Baltimore in 1864, a descendant of an old German family represented the Germans of Baltimore, Henry W.

50. Wecker, April 27, 1860.

51. *Turnzeitung*, May 1, 1850.

52. Frank I. Herriott, *The Conference of the German Republicans at the Deutsches Haus, Chicago, May 14–15, 1860* (Transactions of the Illinois Historical Society, 1928).

53. *Report of the Proceedings of the Republican Convention in Chicago, 1860*. One of the delegates, Armour, declared, "We were recommended, not instructed." On the second ballot, out of the 11 Maryland votes 8 were given to Bates and 3 to Seward and on the third 2 to Seward and 9 to Lincoln.

54. *Report of the Republican Convention, 1860*, p. 144. *Report of the Republican Convention,*

Hoffman, the grandson of a German who had immigrated in Revolutionary times and had, about 1780, established one of the first paper mills in this country.⁵⁵ Hoffmann had distinguished himself in the political life of Maryland during the years before the Civil War; among other things he served for some years as a member of the Legislature. As chairman of the Maryland delegation to the Convention of 1864 Hoffmann seconded the re-nomination of Lincoln.⁵⁶ At the close of the Convention he was elected the Maryland representative on the National Committee of the Republican Party.⁵⁷ In the autumn of the same year his name once more became prominent, when Maryland was to vote on the adoption of a new constitution which was to abolish slavery and Hoffman turned to Lincoln for an expression of his opinion. Two days before the voting, October 10, 1864, the President sent an open letter to Henry W. Hoffmann, which, as the latter had hoped, aided in winning over the public in favor of the new constitution.⁵⁸

Jacob Tome's share in the activities of the newly-founded Republican party in Maryland should not be overlooked. Tome (1810–1898), one of the wealthiest merchants in Maryland during the latter part of the nineteenth century, was a descendant of Pennsylvania-German forebears. The original form of the name was Thom. His memory is preserved in the name of the school he founded, Tome School, at Port Deposit, Md. Tome was elected state senator in 1863 by the Union Party in Cecil County. He retained his seat until 1867 and took an active part, especially in questions of finance.⁵⁹

Another enthusiastic follower of Lincoln among the Germans was William Julian Albert, the director of a large mining company in Baltimore.⁶⁰ Albert presided over the first meeting of citizens of the Union party held in Maryland, which assembled at Catonsville, to denounce the proceedings of South Carolina, and to pledge Maryland to the support of the Government. In 1861 Albert was delegated to go to Washington to explain to President Lincoln the difficult situation of Baltimore and to ask for help; his attempt to bring new life to the commerce of the city which had been injured by the war was as successful as possible under the circumstances. Albert's house was the gathering place of the unionists in Baltimore. He cooperated most ardently to organize the Republican Party and to found the Union Club of which he later became president. In 1864 he was president of the electoral college of Maryland for the approaching presidential election.

1864, p. 1. The only other information I was able to find regarding Wagner was a brief mention in John Tweedy, *A History of the Republican Conventions* (Danbury, Conn., 1910), p. 42.

55. *Biographical Cyclopaedia of Representative Men of Maryland* (Baltimore, 1879), p. 316.

56. *Proceedings of the Republican Convention in Baltimore in 1864*, pp. 31 and 74.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

58. Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln* (New York, 1890), VIII, p. 467.

59. *Bibliographical Cyclopaedia*, p. 5 f.

60. *Baltimore Past and Present* (Baltimore, 1871), pp. 169 ff.; Hamilton Owens, *Baltimore on the Chesapeake* (Garden City, N.Y., 1941) p. 281.

The *Turner* were the first group in Baltimore to support the nominee of the Chicago Convention, Lincoln, as a body and energetically. The headquarters of the Turner Societies of America were at the time located in Baltimore and here also its organ, the weekly *Turnzeitung*, was published. Consequently the history of the *Turnzeitung* of these years forms part of the history of the Germans in Baltimore.⁶¹ One ought not underestimate the political influence of the *Turnzeitung*, since it spoke for 20,000 members of the German Socialist Turner Society. When therefore the Baltimore *Turnzeitung* first raised its voice in favor of Lincoln there was great joy in the Lincoln camp because of these new adherents.⁶² Needless to state, the Baltimore editors of the paper—Wilhelm Rapp, Dr. Edward Wiss, and Dr. Adolph Wiesner—were all thorough Republicans. From Baltimore the *Turner* headquarters sent on October 16, 1860, an appeal to all *Turner* societies to campaign for Lincoln. "We *Turner* fight against slavery, Nativism, or any other kind of restriction based on color, religion, or place of birth, since all this is incompatible with any cosmopolitan view-point."⁶³ Since the attitude of the *Turnzeitung* is identical with that of the *Wecker* it is unnecessary to repeat details, except to mention their reaction to the events at Harper's Ferry. Both papers show no sympathy for John Brown; his actions were described as "a mad *Putsch* of a fanatic driven to despair by an unkind fate."⁶⁴ The *Turnzeitung* blamed the South for making a mountain out of a molehill by demanding a search for "wire-pullers," of which there were none at all. It went on to say that one could almost believe that Southerners had been the stage managers of the affair, were it not that John Brown was just as honest as he was fanatical, because this mad raid certainly served to inflame public opinion in Dixie. The calm, measured judgment here expressed concerning John Brown was angrily criticized by more violent *Turner* from northern states; especially the Boston *Turner* protested against the location of the editorial office in a slave state where it was subject to a certain amount of local pressure.⁶⁵ The riots of April 19 and 20, 1861, caused the precipitate removal from Baltimore of the editorial offices of the *Turner* Societies.

It seems in place to say a bit more concerning these riots. The *Turner* had never made a secret of their enthusiasm for Lincoln.⁶⁶ Among the thirty-two Germans who in the middle of April, on the very day after Lincoln's appeal, went to Wash-

61. Of the volumes of the *Turnzeitung* published in Baltimore 1859–1861 there is extant only a single copy, property of the Boston Public Library.

62. William Baringer, *Lincoln's Rise to Power* (Boston, 1937), p. 190.

63. Baltimore, *Seine Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Baltimore, 1887), p. 234.

64. *Turnzeitung*, October 18, 1859.

65. *Ibid.*, November 1, 1859.

66. Reports on Republican mass meetings in the *Turnhalle*. *Turnzeitung*, October 30 and November 6, 1860.

ington to enlist as volunteers, fully one-half were *Turner*.⁶⁷ Regiments of German *Turner*, among them many from Baltimore, held Washington until troops from the North arrived.⁶⁸ Thus everyone in Baltimore knew what was to be expected of the *Turner*, and that led to an event that in a tragic-comical vein followed the turbulent Baltimore street battles of April 19, 1861.⁶⁹ On this very day a violent mob had appeared before the *Turnhalle* on West Pratt Street to demand from the *Turner* that they lower the Union banner and hoist the Maryland flag. This was to no avail, for the *Turner* had declared that they would rather blow up their hall than lower the Union flag.⁷⁰

When on the following Saturday, April 20, the news spread throughout the city that the German company of *Turner* Rifles had two days previously sent arms to Washington and had offered the services of the company to the Government, a violent riot ensued. A mob collected before the *Turnhalle*, which contained the armory of the *Turner*, invaded the building and smashed everything to bits, from heavy furniture and gymnasium apparatus to the dishes in the kitchen and the bottles in the bar. The only weapons that the mob discovered were four old muskets, which they of course carried off. Then the police appeared—after everything had been smashed and the mob had disbanded—and Captain Gardener with his fifteen policemen solemnly locked the building. The majority of the *Turner* had to flee, most of them going to the Union army.⁷¹

A similar fate on the same day overtook the office of the *Wecker* on Frederick Street. Here too a boisterous mob appeared and made preparations to storm the building. Windows were smashed and some of the machinery, employed in printing the only two Republican papers in Maryland, the *Wecker* and the *Turnzeitung*, was destroyed. However, the rioters had to withdraw before they could complete their vandalism. Whether this was because courageous Mrs. Schnauffer faced down the mob or whether the police arrived this time more promptly, is a matter regarding which reports differ.⁷² The *Wecker* building was evidently not destroyed completely. The editors had to flee and the paper could not be published for several weeks. Only after the city had been occupied by troops, the editor of the

67. *Wecker*, April 19, 1861.

68. *Ibid.*, May 20, 1861.

69. *The Pennsylvania German*, VIII (1907), 19, 62, 117.

70. Heinrich Metzner, *Gerchichte dea Turnerbundes* (Indianapolis, 1874), p. 77. Franz Hubert Cortan, *Gerchichte det Turnverein Vorwärts 1867–1892* (Baltimore, 1892).

71. *Baltimore Sun*, April 22, 1861; Cortan, *op. cit.*, p. 1; Scharf, *Chronicles of Baltimore*, p. 600. Cortan reports that the mob "was led by a German," but investigation has yielded no information on this point. Scharf, who on account of his sympathies with the South did not wish to represent the outbreak to be a violent act of the mob, says that "this act was committed by a number of indignant Southern men."

72. Zucker, *op. cit.*, p. 22; J. T. Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County* (Baltimore, 1881), p. 630. The *Sun*, April 22, 1861, reports: "The crowd soon dispersed, not, however, until the

paper, William Schnauffer, a brother of the founder, could return to resume publication.

A similar outbreak of mob violence took place a few days later against Leopold Blumenberg (1827–1876), a merchant with strong Union sympathies. Blumenberg, of German-Jewish descent, was born in Brandenburg, Germany, and came to Baltimore in 1854, where he soon attained considerable prosperity. He was one of the first to follow Lincoln's appeal in 1861. In 1863, together with three other Germans, Bartell, Kühne and Straubenmüller, he founded a special German "Unionsverein."⁷³ He retired from business for the purpose of devoting himself to the Union cause, and spent a good deal of his own money in helping to raise the Fifth Regiment of Maryland Volunteers.⁷⁴ This earned him the bitterest enmity of Baltimore Secessionists who openly threatened his life and made it necessary that after an unsuccessful attack Blumenberg's house had to be guarded by the police for several nights. Blumenberg became a major in the Fifth Regiment and fought for some time under McClellan. He led his troops against Lee's army in the Battle of Antietam and was wounded so severely that for more than a year he was bedridden.⁷⁵ Lincoln then appointed him provost-marshall of the Third Maryland District, a post he held until the close of the draft, and President Johnson named him a brigadier-general for his valiant services in battle.

If on the other hand one examines the troop lists of the Maryland regiments who fought on the side of the South, the absence of German names is most striking. Of course, here and there a few German names are found but the percentage is extremely small, especially among the officers. Only one German—or German-Swiss—name occurs among the officers of the Maryland Infantry, a Lieutenant William P. Zollinger who distinguished himself particularly in reorganizing the Second Maryland Infantry Regiment in Richmond.⁷⁶ In addition we find just a few more in the lists of the Maryland Infantry: W. H. Slingluff, William Ritter, Alfred

Southern flag had been thrown out. No violence was done, and all good citizens regretted that any such demonstration was made." However, the *Sun* stands alone in reporting no violence. Cortan as well as Scharf speak of destruction—"office completely wrecked, building seriously injured" (Scharf). Probably the machinery was destroyed in part, for the *Wecker* could not be published from April 20 to 29; and after that it appeared for a considerable period as a so-called "extra," a single fly-leaf.

73. *Wecker*, September 23, 1863.

74. *Biographical Cyclopaedia*, p. 477; *Wecker*, April 30, 1861.

75. *History and Roster of Maryland Volunteers, War of 1861–1865* (Balt., 1898), I, 179, 181; Scharf, *History of Western Maryland*, I, 249. Some of the German names among members of the Fifth Regiment killed or wounded at Antietam are: (Officers) Magnus Moltke, Leopold Blumenberg, William Bamberger; (Privates) Warmboldt, Preiss, Stahl, Harochkamp, Bruder, Kohler, Merling, Kohlmann, Braun, Bremermann.

76. W. W. Goldsborough, *The Maryland Line in the Confederate Army, 1861–1865* (Baltimore, 1900), pp. 85, 86, 152.

Riddlemoser, Joseph Wagner.⁷⁷ In the First Maryland Cavalry we find only two German names among the twenty officers: A. F. Schwartz and F. C. Slingluff; in the Second Maryland Cavalry Herman F. Keidel is mentioned among the staff officers.⁷⁸ In the Maryland Artillery the only Germans that occur are Corporal W. F. Bollinger and Captain W. L. Ritter.⁷⁹ There were thus some Germans among the Maryland Confederate troops, but they constitute a mere scattering and their percentage compared with the great participation of Germans in the Northern cause is strikingly small. It might be noted that the Maryland Line in the Confederate Army was recruited particularly from Southern Maryland, where there had been least German immigration.

Up to this point there has been mention only of riots against German groups faithful to the Union. Naturally enough in the later years of the War we find that the opposite took place, namely that Southern sympathizers—among these also some Germans—were pelted with rocks. In the course of such a demonstration on May 25, 1862, the building of the *Deutsche Correspondent* was visited by an excited mob. Scharf reports on this as follows:⁸⁰

The office of the German Correspondent was then visited, but the proprietors stated that they were about to display their flag, when the crowd proceeded to . . . On returning, the crowd went again to the Correspondent's office, where a portion of the flag, showing the stripes, was hanging from an upper window, but this was not satisfactory to the crowd, who required that the entire flag; with the stars, should be exposed to view.

It has been stated that the *Correspondent* was Democratic but not Secessionist. Among the Germans of Baltimore, particularly among those of the upper classes, there were quite a number of adherents of the Confederacy. The *Turner* Societies who sympathized with the Union were composed mostly of members of the middle and lower classes. The social center of the elite was the Germania Club and this club was considered a hot-bed of Secessionism;⁸¹ hence when the city was placed under martial law the Club was very quickly closed on the command of General Butler. The Germania Club in these years was an organization of merchants. Baltimore's tobacco trade at the time was almost exclusively in German hands. The two chief ports for tobacco export and import, respectively, were Baltimore and

77. *Ibid.*, 76, 155 ff.

78. *Ibid.*, 166, 246.

79. *Ibid.*, 270, 315.

80. *Chronicles*, p. 624.

81. From an unpublished speech by Henry G. Hilken on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the club, 1910. (In possession of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland in the Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore.)

Bremen and hence the tobacco trade was largely in the hands of Bremen merchants who had branch houses or business partners in Baltimore. This seems to be the explanation of the fact that the merchants who were members of the Germania Club and who dealt mostly in tobacco sympathized with the tobacco-raising Southern states; their economic interests and friendly social relations with Southern planters had naturally produced this result. The events of the war years made their impression also on this Club, as when in 1862 the president, Frederick Schepeler, a tobacco merchant, had to withdraw, because he had been a bit too free in his expression of sympathy for the South and thereby had endangered the existence of the Club during the period of martial law under General Butler.⁸² In the guest books of the Club one finds during the first years of the War innumerable entries of the names of merchants from Southern states, all the way from Virginia to Louisiana. At times a guest entered as his place of residence "Confederate States" or "Confederacy," which in these days was meant to convey a declaration of political principles. From 1863 on, the Union sympathizers came more and more to the fore. The Secessionist Schepeler was succeeded as president by his business partner, Albert Schumacher, a thorough Unionist. When the Club made a declaration to the effect that in political matters it was absolutely neutral, General Butler gave permission to have it reopened; thereupon the members could foregather again—to be sure under a Union flag suspended in the club house, whether they liked this or not.⁸³

Next to the Germania Club the Concordia Society was the social center of the well-to-do Germans. Here, too, there was to be found a fairly large Secessionist group. August Becker, for some time editor of the *Wecker*, relates an occurrence that was probably quite symptomatic of the general attitude in the Concordia Society. Becker was chatting one evening in 1861 in the club rooms with his friend, Justus Bruehl, concerning the probable outcome of the war and gave frank expression to his Union sympathies. Thereupon all other members left the room by way of a demonstration of their feelings, leaving Becker and Bruehl finally quite alone. "You spoke too vigorously," said Bruehl, "These gentlemen are all devoted to the Confederate cause."⁸⁴

One well-known Forty-Eighter is found even among the adherents of the Southern cause: Dr. Adalbert John Volck.⁸⁵ His house in Baltimore became a rendezvous

82. *Ibid.*

83. Dieter Cunz, *History of the Germania Club* (Baltimore, 1940), p. 13.

84. *Der deutsche Pidnier* (Cincinnati, 1869), I, 286. Strongly pro-Southern, too, was Gustav Wilhelm Lurman, a wealthy Baltimore merchant, who had come from Bremen before 1835. Mrs. Elinor S. Heiser, his granddaughter, characterizes him in her reminiscences, *Days Gone By* (Baltimore, 1940), p. 90: "His sympathies were strongly with the South in the Civil War, and in its behalf he gave and lost largely his fortune."

85. Adalbert J. Volck (1828–1912), was born in Augsburg, Germany. After his participation in the Revolution of 1848 in Berlin he had to flee Germany and came to the United States in 1849.

for Southern sympathizers in the earlier years of the War, and at times he offered Confederate soldiers a hiding place there. Further than that, Volck actively assisted in smuggling medical supplies into the South. Suspicion fell on him so definitely, that in 1861, at the instance of General Butler, he was for some time incarcerated in Fort McHenry.⁸⁶ It was as a caricaturist that Volck gained his chief importance during the Civil War. Quite consciously he attempted to counteract the influence of the famous cartoonist on the Northern side, Thomas Nast, who also happened to be a German Forty-Eighter. Under the pseudonym, "V. Blada," he published a series of cartoons, in which he attempted to heap ridicule on the Union, especially on President Lincoln and General Butler.⁸⁷ His *Confederate War Etchings* and his *Sketches from the Civil War* in which he shows markedly artistic gifts, were of considerable aid to the cause of the South. It was either he or his brother, the sculptor Frederic Volck, who made the famous bust of Jefferson Davis which was engraved on the ten cent stamps of the Confederacy.⁸⁸ Adalbert Volck's sketch of Stonewall Jackson was very popular in the South and his portrait of Robert E. Lee hangs in the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Va. Volck continued in his love for the South to the very end of his days, displaying it also in another art at which he later tried his hand, the work of the silversmith. The last significant work he undertook in this field was a memorial shield, completed in 1909, three years before his death: "To the Women of the South—As a continual reminder . . . of the splendid example of self-sacrifice, endurance and womanly virtues displayed during the war between the States." Volck is particularly interesting because he was an exception to the vast majority of the liberal Forty-Eighters who favored the side of the North.

From all this it becomes evident that the picture presented by the Maryland Germans during the Civil War is by no means a unified one and that their attitude cannot be set down in a simple statement. Still one might generalize from the evidence as follows: in the western part of the State where the German element had largely been amalgamated by other groups of settlers, the exceptionally vig-

Following a two-years' stay in the Middle West he was called in 1851 as instructor to the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery. He was a Charter member of the Maryland State Dental Association and a founder of the Association of Dental Surgeons. See *Dictionary of American Biography*, *Encyclopedia Americana* (1939), Vol. 28, pp. 172 f. A full account of his life and work is given by George C. Keidel in *Catonsville Biographies* published in the Catonsville, Md., *Argus*, Oct. 2–Nov. 20, 1915.

86. When after the conclusion of the War General Butler was a candidate for the governorship of Massachusetts Volck's caricatures helped considerably in bringing about his defeat.

87. Albert Shaw, *Abraham Lincoln. A Cartoon History* (New York, 1929), I, pp. 12, 63; II, pp. 236, 253.

88. August Dietz, *The Portal Service of the Confederate Staten of America* (Richmond, Va., 1929), p. 222.

orous pro-Union attitude of Frederick and Washington Counties can probably be justly attributed to the strong German element in the population. It is in the rural districts, in the western counties, that we find the large number of Marylanders of Pennsylvania-German stock who clung conservatively to their traditional membership in the Democratic party and yet remained adherents of the Union. In Baltimore the Germans were much more recent arrivals, the German language and German social life still flourished there, and therefore one can speak here of a more definitely German attitude than in the western settlements dating back to Colonial times. The Germans in Baltimore represented the most southerly outpost of the Republican Party. Hence there were to be found here the most fiery Lincoln adherents south of the Mason and Dixon Line. In Western Maryland the Union sympathizers remained within the Democratic Party organization, whereas in Baltimore they were Republicans as a matter of course. This keen party feeling in turn drove the Democratic Germans of Baltimore into the radical, secessionist wing of the party, in contrast to the conservative Democrats of Western Maryland. The urban section of the German element in Maryland separated itself, politically speaking, approximately along the lines of its sociological strata. Among the wealthy Germans, bound to the South by the ties of the tobacco trade, there were many Secessionists or at least Southern sympathizers.⁸⁹ Just as there was in Baltimore the southernmost group of Lincoln enthusiasts so there was here also the northernmost clique of German adherents of the Confederate cause. The latter were mostly men who had been in the country for a considerable time, generally more than ten years, and had become quite acclimatized. The middle and lower social strata of German immigrants, men who were in general associated with the *Turner* movement, stood as a group behind the Union cause. Their intellectual leaders were liberal refugees from the Revolution of 1848 who without the least hesitation flocked to the Republican banner. We have mentioned above how important it was for this group, perhaps the most valuable to America of all German immigrants, that they found it possible through joining in the fight for a holy cause to unite themselves spiritually with their new fatherland. On the other hand, it is unnecessary to dwell at length on the advantages accruing to the Union cause through the fact that the strong and enterprising young men of this generation of German immigrants placed their strength at the disposal of the North. This was of decisive importance especially in the border states where public opinion was divided and where a few brave individuals counted for ever so much more than in the homogeneous and safe atmosphere of Northern states. And how im-

89. Cf. Robert T. Clark, Jr. "The New Orleans German Colony in the Civil War," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XX (1937), pp. 990-1015. Clark shows that also in New Orleans the wealthy members of the German colony were ardent adherents of the Confederacy, "because their income was derived in one way or another from the proceeds of slave labor."

portant it was to preserve for the Union, Maryland in particular, can be seen by one glance at the map and the geographical position of the nation's capital.

It seems fitting to close this essay with a quotation from a speech by President Theodore Roosevelt delivered in 1903:⁹⁰

The other day I went out to the battlefield of Antietam, here in Maryland. There the Memorial Church is the German Lutheran Church, which was founded in 1768, the settlement in the neighborhood of Antietam being originally exclusively a German settlement. There is a list of its pastors, and curiously enough, a series of memorial windows of men with German names—men who belonged to the Maryland regiment recruited largely from that region for the Civil War, which Maryland regiment was mainly composed of men of German extraction. In the Civil War it would be difficult to paint in too strong colors what I may well nigh call the all-importance of the attitude of the American citizens of German birth and extraction toward the cause of the Union and liberty, especially in what were then known as the border states. It would have been out of question to have kept Missouri loyal had it not been for the German element therein. So it was in Kentucky,—and but little less important was the part played by the Germans in Maryland.

90. Quoted in *The Pennsylvania German*, V (1904), 44.

Comment

Dieter Cunz, a former professor of history at the University of Maryland, almost single-handedly introduced Marylanders to a new kind of immigration and ethnic history. In his monograph *The Germans in Maryland* and in this article published by the *Maryland Historical Magazine* in 1941, he moved beyond the familiar one-dimensional celebration of the contributions of German leaders to their adopted state. Using material from German societies and newspapers along with the more traditional biographical material about leaders of the community, in this article Cunz investigates the affiliation, behavior, and politics of Germans during the Civil War and, in passing, during Reconstruction. If his determination of nationality on the basis of surnames seems naïve to today's census crunchers, his perspective and conclusions have mostly stood the test of time. In the process of his research on the state's most important group of non-English immigrants, he also revealed to students of the Civil War, accustomed to thinking of that conflict in monolithic sectional terms, just how complex and differentiated the matter of allegiance was.

Cunz's contributions in "The Maryland Germans during the Civil War" are three-fold. First he shows how fighting against slavery and for a democratic Union against an aristocratic South especially resonated with those Germans—the so-called Forty-Eighters—who left their homeland after the failed revolution of 1848. Secondly he reveals how the regional nature of settlement in the so-called "German counties" of Frederick and Washington as well as in Baltimore, but not the slave counties of the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland, influenced politics. These first and second generation Germans overwhelmingly favored the Union. Even the Democratic *Deutsche Correspondent* did not endorse secession, although German tobacco merchants in Baltimore, tied to planters relying on slavery, did favor the Confederacy. Finally Cunz concludes that although a small minority of Germans in Maryland were not a part of this process, the Civil War proved a crucible of nationalism binding Germans to the United States.

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Almira Lincoln Phelps: The Self-Made Woman in the Nineteenth Century

ANNE FIROR SCOTT

The notion of the "self-made man" is a common one in our culture, and was especially so in the nineteenth century. But what of the self-made woman?

At first glance it would seem unlikely that such a phenomenon existed in a society committed to the view that woman's appropriate sphere was the domestic one. Yet there were an increasing number of such women as the nineteenth century progressed and their path to achievement was necessarily different from that followed by men.

Since teaching was the one profession to which women had access, it is not surprising to find a teacher—Almira Lincoln Phelps—not only providing an archetypal example in her own person, but diligently instructing her pupils as to how they might rise in the world through their own efforts.

Though a New Englander by birth and instinct, Mrs. Phelps made her career and her reputation in Maryland. In 1841 she took charge of the Patapsco Female Institute which she directed until 1865. For the ensuing nineteen years she was a pillar of Baltimore, presiding over a salon devoted to literary and scientific subjects, working for the St. Bartholomew's Mission Church and founding its women's society as well as a number of other voluntary associations. Her son Charles Phelps, graduate of Harvard Law School, represented Maryland in the Thirty-Ninth and Fortieth Congresses, and was thereafter a judge and law professor in Baltimore.

If we look closely at the concept of self-making as it was viewed by restless nineteenth-century Americans it was not quite what the cliché suggests. The term "self-made man" usually evokes images of a rags-to-riches career, yet we now know that most of the truly rich did not begin in rags, and did not create their success unaided.¹ A much wider definition of the term would encompass not only the tiny handful who began poor and ended their lives rich, but the much larger number who, beginning their lives on farms or in agricultural villages, exerted themselves to acquire some degree of education, and became the ministers, doctors, lawyers, social reformers, teachers, public officials and merchants, often of modest means, who shaped the emerging town and city culture. They used the word character to sum up the combination of qualities required for this change.

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The process of developing the necessary character and achieving a new status is reported over and over in the biographical sketches in which nineteenth-century men told their own stories or those of their contemporaries. The beginning was usually discontent with life on the family farm. Some, of course, chose to find new farms in the west, but the most ambitious turned their feet toward the town or city. The first quality which they found essential was a high degree of adaptability. Self-reliance and perseverance were almost as vital. Character building, as they saw it, required constant effort, and the capacity to seize each opportunity that presented itself. Neither the training nor the certification for any particular profession were yet firmly fixed: a fact which widened opportunity on the one hand, but led to anxiety-producing uncertainty on the other. Disappointments and set-backs were seen as part of the game, and were often welcomed as tests of resilience and strength, or at least were said to have been welcomed once they had been overcome. For many men religious commitment reinforced the strength of character they were seeking to develop.

Many began with meager material resources, though the cooperation of members of an extended family might make the most of what did exist. In the process of becoming a professional and attaining some degree of local or even national eminence, a man might try three or four careers. Some practiced more than one profession simultaneously, some kept one foot in the older rural culture by continuing to live on a farm while practicing law or medicine. "Success," when it came, might arrive late in life, and in a field far from the one in which the young man had begun.

Similarities amounting almost to a pattern emerge when one dips randomly into the biographies of nineteenth-century male achievers. Mark Hopkins worked as a farm hand in order to go to school, then taught in the South to save money for college. He had a go at theology, law and medicine before a tutorship at Williams almost accidentally opened the career in which he became famous. J. Marion Sims began practicing medicine so inadequately trained that his first two patients, both children, died. Yet, braced by the experience, he returned to more diligent study and became in time the leading gynecologist of his generation, founder of the New York Woman's Hospital. Francis Wayland had begun to practice medicine when a religious experience turned him to theology. Poverty forced him out of Andover Seminary and into a menial tutor's job at Brown University, where his own study and reflection launched him on a notable career as a moral philosopher and reformer of collegiate education. William Woodbridge was licensed as a Congregational minister and thinking of becoming a missionary when a trip to Europe turned his attention to geography. He began to search for better methods of teaching geography, which concern led on to an influential career in pedagogical reform. Amos Eaton read law, worked as a land agent for Stephen Van Rensselaer, became interested in plants, began to study botany and launched a scientific career by the simple expedient of giving public lectures on the subject to anyone

willing to pay a small sum to listen. In time he went on to study geology, created the first *Index* to the geology of the northern states, and joined the small group of scientists who were making science a serious field of study in the colleges.²

It would be possible to pile up example after example of this pattern of trial and error, resilience in the face of set-back, belief in the virtues of adversity, and a strong reliance upon self-education, but enough has been said to show the general pattern followed by self-made men. How did women differ?

"Rising in the world," the stated goal of so many energetic young Americans of both sexes, was, for a woman, most readily accomplished by good sense or good luck in the choice of a husband. If she happened upon a man who had found the complex key to success, she would automatically rise with him, sharing his identity and reflecting whatever glory he might provide. A handful of women, by contrast, set out to achieve eminence on their own. Instead of waiting for fate to provide a husband whose life experience would shape their own, such women boldly set out to shape independent careers by a process of self-making similar to that of ambitious men, but modified by the social constraints summed up in the term "woman's place."

The contrast between the social expectations of the two sexes was dramatic. Men were encouraged, applauded and rewarded for diligent self-improvement. A woman who followed the same pattern ran the risk of being seen as deviant, labeled "strong-minded," caricatured and scorned or even rejected by respectable society. So powerful were the cultural definitions of woman's role, so fixed the restrictions upon educational and professional opportunity, that an ambitious woman had to become adept at appearing to conform to the cultural prescriptions at the very time she was seeking to defy them. Achieving women often spoke with pain of the deviousness they felt in themselves brought on by this necessity.³

The career of Almira Hart Lincoln Phelps offers an instructive example of a woman who paid constant lip service to the idea of a special woman's sphere while stretching the boundaries of that sphere beyond recognition.

"Mrs. Phelps" as she was casually referred to in the press of her time, upon the evident assumption that her name was universally recognized, provides yet another illustration, if another were needed, of the transience of human fame. One of the best known women in America during a good part of the nineteenth century, the second woman ever to be elected to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a textbook author who introduced several generations to the study of botany, an influential pedagogue who played a major role in two pioneering female seminaries and helped to bring Pestalozzian methods into American education, a woman of letters sought after by literary editors,—her name now brings blank stares even from American historians. She is known, if at all, as the sister of Emma Willard, whose own fame, though much diminished, has been somewhat preserved by the fact that the school she founded still bears her name.⁴

A sketch of Almira Phelps' life shows how one woman created a career, and from her writings it is possible to discover how she justified her ambitious achievements and attempted to guide young women who might wish to follow her example.⁵ She carefully instructed her pupils in the methods of making themselves into strong characters and taught them how to elude the restrictions of "woman's sphere" without ever admitting they had done so.

Almira Hart was the seventeenth and last child in her family; a family descended on one side from the founder of Hartford, on the other from Massachusetts Bay Puritans. Her father had fought in the Revolution. Being seventeenth might have been a disadvantage—the parents were old, money for educating children would have been exhausted—but in her case, it was quite otherwise. Her much older brothers were able to help pay for schooling, and her sister, Emma Hart, already embarked on her own self-made career, was a useful mentor. Both sisters had been precocious children, encouraged by their father who was said to have read Milton and Shakespeare in his spare time, and to have shared his enthusiasm for such reading with his daughters.⁶

Almira was a forceful young person. At fourteen, accused of some dereliction of duty and placed for punishment in the teacher's chair at the district school, she used that vantage point to deliver a spirited critique of a recitation in progress, and then wrote her weekly composition, in the form of a protest, on the subject of fitting punishment to crime. The reaction of the teacher to these assaults on his dignity is not recorded, but her behavior was a good forecast of things to come.

Two years later she began teaching in a country school and "boarding around" with local families, few of them as cultivated as her own had been. Though speaking well of the discipline this experience afforded, she decided that she would have to move up in the world to find a more congenial environment. For a young woman setting such a goal in 1810 there were two options: she could marry well, or she could prepare for a more ambitious teaching career. Since no suitable alliance had yet been offered, Almira took the second path and repaired to Middlebury, Vermont, where her sister had just taken charge of a female academy, and where three young men, students at Middlebury College, were willing to include her in their study sessions.

In an effort to go still further in her education, she moved for a while to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where her cousin Nancy Hinsdale ran a highly respected academy. Living with high Federalist relatives did not prevent her from expressing Jeffersonian convictions in public, sometimes with dramatic intensity. The Hinsdale connection put her in line to be examined for a job as teacher of the winter school at New Britain, the first time a woman had been considered for that post. Confronted with a difficult question in astronomy she covered her lack of precise knowledge by offering to read to the examiners an original essay on "The Duties and Responsibilities of Teachers." This device, she said, allowed her to ex-

hibit her technical knowledge of reading, writing and orthography as well as her appreciation of the office for which she was being examined. It need hardly be added that she got the job.⁷ After New Britain she briefly conducted a private school in Berlin where she enjoyed a lively social life, but when a better job, the headship of a school in Sandy Hill, New York, was offered, ambition took precedence over pleasure. She moved again, telling herself that it was her duty to do the hard rather than the easy thing. "May the thought of having sacrificed my wishes to a conviction of duty inspire me with that firmness which my situation demands," she noted, somewhat self-righteously, in her diary.⁸

At Sandy Hill she hit upon a new tool for developing her mental skills, and took to making written abstracts, "in condensed, logical form . . ." of each book she read. She was soon teaching her pupils to follow her example. It was also about this time that she came across Lydia Sigourney's *Moral Pieces in Prose and Verse* which inspired her to think that she, too, though a woman, might become a writer.⁹

Thus far her life had been a steady series of small triumphs, as she prepared herself for better and better teaching posts, and experienced the excitement that accompanied the acquisition of knowledge, the development of mental skills, a spreading reputation as a teacher.

In 1817, when she was 24, an opportunity for a more traditional female career presented itself in the form of a proposal of marriage from one Simeon Lincoln, editor of a Federalist paper in Hartford. His personal charm and their shared pleasure in literature overcame the disadvantage of his politics, and she retired for the time being to domestic life. Three children were born before her husband's sudden death in 1823 threw her upon her own resources to support herself and the two surviving children.

She returned almost at once to the district school at New Britain, but before many months a better chance came. Three years earlier Emma Hart Willard had opened the Troy Female Seminary in New York State in an effort to provide something closer to higher education for women than anything hitherto available. Now, she asked her widowed sister to join the enterprise. In the atmosphere of intense intellectual effort Emma Willard fostered at Troy, Almira Lincoln launched herself upon the study of Latin, French, Greek, Spanish and higher mathematics. Her greatest excitement came when Amos Eaton invited her to learn botany under his tutelage. "A new world seemed opened to her imagination in pursuit of the natural sciences," she wrote.¹⁰

Eaton, delighted with so apt and diligent a pupil, was soon calling her his "scientific assistant," and encouraging her to apply Pestalozzi's methods of inductive learning to the teaching of botany. None of the existing textbooks were designed to train pupils to work directly with plants, as Pestalozzian theory required, and so with Eaton's help she began to compose such a book. *Familiar Lectures on Botany* or "Lincoln's Botany" as it was generally called, became a stan-

dard text used in schools and colleges in every part of the country for half a century. It was destined to be many times revised and reprinted, and to introduce several generations of youngsters to the study of science. In time various college professors of botany, some eminent, would attribute their first love for the field to an early encounter with this book. Exhilarated by the favorable response to her botany text, she next undertook to translate from the French Vauquelin's *Dictionnaire de Chemie* and was rewarded with an encomium from Eaton's good friend, Benjamin Silliman, professor of Chemistry at Yale, who called her translation "learned, judicious and able." She continued to grow in competence and self-confidence, and doubtless more than family loyalty was involved when Emma Willard left Almira Lincoln in full charge of the Seminary when she herself departed for a long visit to Europe in 1830. The acting principal took to administration as readily as she had to scholarship, and the seminary proceeded on its accustomed way quite as well as when the head was in residence.

People who were not frightened by Almira Lincoln's forceful personality often found her magnetic. In 1831 John Phelps, the widowed father of two Troy pupils, came to visit his daughters and was immediately attracted to the thirty-eight year old widow. After a courtship largely conducted by mail she agreed to marry him, upon the condition that she would continue the various activities she subsumed under the phrase "my literary labors." She moved to Phelps' home in Guilford, Vermont, where the amount of work she accomplished was prodigious by any standard. With full responsibility for the household, with two children of her own and several of her husband's to care for, she nevertheless revised her botany text, wrote three similar books to introduce students to chemistry, natural philosophy and geology, edited the manuscripts of the weekly lectures she had given at Troy into *Lectures for Young Ladies*, wrote several articles for the *American Ladies Magazine* and *Godey's Lady's Book*, organized a new church, a Sabbath school, a library and a Female Society for the Promotion of Religious Knowledge. She conducted a three week "normal course" for teachers in her home while she was pregnant. She bore a son in 1833 and a daughter in 1836. During the infancy of the first she kept a meticulous record of his day-by-day development and behavior, which was published as an appendix to a book she had translated from French and which constituted one of the first American contributions to descriptive developmental psychology.¹¹

John Phelps was a strong figure in his own right, a self-educated lawyer who had served in the constitutional convention of Vermont and was still a member of its legislature where his involvement on the losing side of a heated argument over slavery increased his willingness to pull up stakes when his wife was asked to take over a female seminary in West Chester, Pennsylvania. She accepted the post with due sensitivity to the mores, writing a friend: "There is great danger that injustice may be done in the public mind to a gentleman whose wife makes herself conspicuous; we must do all we can to prevent this."¹² And lest posterity be misled, she

made a note in the family Bible: "He was gratified in seeing his wife successful and honored, never imagining that this could detract from any distinctions to which he felt himself entitled."¹³

The West Chester Seminary fell victim to the Panic of 1837 and the Phelps, after a brief stay at Rahway, New Jersey, moved on to take charge of the Patapsco Female Institute, a faltering school under the control of the Episcopal diocese of Maryland.

While her husband took charge of the business affairs of the school, Mrs. Phelps ran the educational program, speedily establishing the "order" and "system" which had been her by-words at Troy. She set up a three year course, required pupils to study mathematics, philosophy and languages, announced that no one was to enter late or leave early, and established a curriculum to train teachers. As fast as she was able she tightened requirements, extended the curriculum, provided for instruction for some who were post graduates, and developed the public examination as a method of encouraging diligence on the part of pupils and respect on the part of the community. In a short time Patapsco was making a name in the south comparable to that which Troy enjoyed in New York, the middle states and the Ohio valley.

Mrs. Phelps perceived southern women, especially daughters of slaveholders, as presenting special problems for an educator. She worried lest they never really learn to work, and felt she had to cajole them into undertaking the difficult subjects which she held to be essential for the full development of the mind. She never concealed her high regard for New England ways and Puritan values, a regard which did not always endear her to southern pupils or their parents. One disgruntled student accused her of wanting only to make money, and of spying on her pupils. A dissatisfied North Carolina congressman whose daughters were enrolled at Patapsco criticized her strong-minded behavior and thought her inadequately attentive to the development of feminine charm. On the second point she would have agreed with him; it was her pride that Patapsco provided women with advantages corresponding to "those enjoyed by young men in the colleges" and she said she was more interested in training good women than fine ladies.¹⁴

Other pupils praised the school and its preceptress and though Patapsco's student body was never as large as that of Troy, it was soon sending trained teachers south and west to become part of the spreading women's educational network which Emma Willard had inaugurated four decades earlier.¹⁵

In 1849 John Phelps died, and for seven years Almira Phelps ran the seminary alone. In 1856, stricken by the death in a railway accident of her oldest daughter, Jane Lincoln, a remarkable young person whose life had exemplified her mother's ideal of what the educated woman should be, she retired from the school. She was sixty-three.

"Retirement" did not connote a diminution of activity. Though Phelps took part in Baltimore high society, she continued to read, write, talk, engage in poli-

tics, and take delight in new challenges. In 1870 she addressed a passionate document to the Senate and the House of Representatives urging them to support Cuba's fight for independence. At 81, speaking to the Maryland Academy of Sciences, she made a spirited attack on the theory of evolution, though honoring Darwin for "all the good he had done in the search for truth."¹⁶

Along the way she organized and presided over various voluntary associations including the St. Bartholomew's Mission church in Baltimore, and its Woman's Aid Society. She firmly excluded the rector from meetings of the latter. This show of sturdy feminism was at odds with her decision to join the anti-suffrage forces and to argue publicly, with her usual vigor, against the wisdom of granting the vote to women. The fear of her influence was enough to inspire the *Woman's Journal* to an acerb comment: "Years of teaching give to dogmatic natures an increase of arrogance, which it is hard to keep in subjection."¹⁷

She continued to revise her textbooks, except for the one in geology since she felt that field had left her far behind, addressed the American Association for the Advancement of Science twice, supervised the education of her grandchildren, and advised her son, a member of Congress, on matters of public policy. After the Civil War she created a Society for the Liberal Education of Southern Girls to help young women from the impoverished states resume their education. Sixty-seven women were able to go to school under its auspices, a number of whom, in the best Phelps tradition, went back south to teach.¹⁸

The very substantial income from her textbooks provided her with comfortable surroundings; she continued to preside in matriarchal splendor over a three-generational household, and over a salon for the Baltimore intelligentsia, until she died at ninety-one, in full possession of her faculties.

In two published volumes of lectures, as well as in a novel and various essays, Almira Phelps left a record of her efforts to instruct young women on a wide variety of topics, among them the art of self-education and the method of building an autonomous identity. Didacticism was an integral part of nineteenth century culture, and young men, too, were the recipients of a vast amount of advice on self-improvement. However, the task which Mrs. Phelps undertook was somewhat more complicated than that faced by the assortment of philosophers, college professors, and medical men who tried to instruct men on the ways and means of getting ahead in the world. Her purpose was to help young women find their way to an independent identity, whether they married or not, and to help them prepare for achievement. In order to do this she had to help them call into question the firm net of cultural doctrines which, on the face of it, were quite at odds with her purposes. These doctrines were based on the assumptions that:

1. women were created to be wives and mothers, helpmates for men, and took their identity from their relationships to husbands or male children.

2. women's innate abilities lay in the emotional rather than in the intellectual realm.

3. God had appointed men to be the decision makers, and fathers were to families as God himself was to believers.

4. women who did not marry had failed to fulfill their destiny, though this error could be partly rectified if the woman spent her time serving some man, a father or brother, or in a pinch, a brother-in-law.

How could a woman, surrounded with these cultural restraints, shape herself into a strong character capable of living, if she chose, an independent life? While achieving men were admired and held up as models to the young, women were admired for self-sacrifice and piety, and were often despised for asserting themselves. Thus Mrs. Phelps and others of her persuasion had first to show young women that individual achievement was possible for a woman, then had to help them prepare for intellectual independence by building their own characters, and finally had to teach them to use the cultural expectations to their own advantage. It was a formidable task.

Reduced to essentials, what Phelps offered young women, in three overlapping categories, was first, her understanding of the relationship of education to the process of character development; second, her firm belief that self-education was possible and, indeed, desirable, and finally instruction in how to deal with the dangers involved in stepping out of the prescribed "Woman's sphere."¹⁹

Her intellectual starting point was a combination of Descartes and Locke. The mind is the basis of identity; all knowledge comes through the senses. Human beings are born with potential which can only be developed by exercise. Since knowledge is expanded by careful and purposeful observation and minds are developed by use, it follows that each person makes his or her own identity. Perhaps Almira Phelps herself did not realize how radical these assumptions were when applied to women, whose identities had for so long been seen as being formed by a relationship to a man.

She believed the purpose of education was to create an individual equipped to deal with whatever, in the providence of God, life should present. She called this goal "elevation of character." Learning and morality she believed to be complementary necessities: learning without moral principles could be dangerous; morality without an educated mind would be ineffective. Her ideal young woman was both learned and pious.

The process of creating one's own character required unremitting effort. While teachers could be helpful to the very young, self-education was "after all the great business of life," and the sooner a woman cut loose from teachers and took full responsibility for her own education, the sooner was a desirable maturity likely to be acquired. "Think what you want to be and then strive to render yourself such," she told her pupils, advising them to make a written plan for their lives. Almira

Phelps' enthusiasm for intellectual growth was visible despite her conventional nineteenth-century sentimental style. She emphasized the sheer joy of mastery, and quoted approvingly a French author who urged women to learn to reason so they could enjoy the greatest minds, though he did suggest that such enjoyment be kept secret. Her recommendations for reading made no concessions to the supposed weakness of the female mind: Gibbon, Hume, Robertson, Voltaire, Locke, Paley were among the authors she praised. Nor did she believe that any field of study was beyond woman's range. "No kind of knowledge of literature or science is useless to a teacher. . . . Almost anything you can learn by observation may at one time or another aid in your educational labors," she told them. Formal schooling was the barest beginning: when you leave school "far from considering that you know everything, you must think you have almost everything to learn." She thought the female mind peculiarly suited to developing scientific theories.

Having established the general framework, she proceeded with specific instructions for developing powers of reasoning. Begin by studying mathematics, she said, then learn to observe carefully, make detailed investigations of subjects which interest you, then think, compare and examine your own judgment. The last was important, for she had a strong belief in the virtue of independent thinking, which, combined with her faith in the potentialities of inductive reasoning, led to her constant emphasis upon self-reliance. For her own part, she did not hesitate to offer a critique of Aristotelian logic, or to make emendations to a celebrated work in moral philosophy. None of this advice would have been remarkable had it been directed to young men. Directed to young women in the 1830s it bordered on the revolutionary.

She stressed the need for women to study psychology ("philosophy of mind") and instructed them to observe carefully the functioning of their own minds in order to work out the general principles of mental operations. She recommended that each keep a private journal "in which the moral tenor of your actions and the bent of your minds should be scrupulously noted. This journal should be for your own inspection only; for such is the deceitfulness of the human heart, that it is very apt to suggest a too flattering picture of itself, where it is made with the design of being seen by any but the original," adding that "Man, know thyself, is a precept as important as it is difficult in practice."²⁰

Phelps provided a whole series of precepts on the art of study. Concentration, she told her pupils, was of the first importance. Do one thing at a time, and give it your whole attention. Practice writing concise summaries of books you read. Try to explain what you are learning to other people. And so on. She was a proponent of what is nowadays called the inquiry method. Her stern insistence on concentration was at odds with the whole pattern of the usual female life which perforce called for doing many different things and turning rapidly from one to another. Yet she insisted "Attention is indeed everything; without it nothing requiring mental effort can be well done." And, in another place: "It is the most difficult task of

young students to gain that command of their trains of thought which scientific research requires."

The Greek ideal of the sound mind in the sound body appealed to her, and in light of the widespread ill-health and physically constrained life of many nineteenth-century women, her preaching about health takes on greater significance. If you want to make something of yourself, she told her pupils, you must get regular exercise, enough sleep, and take food and drink in moderation. She had studied physiology and passed on precepts drawn from that study which, like all the rest of her advice, rested on a bedrock of belief in the possibility of self control and self-help. She advised her pupils to pay close attention to their own physical natures and their particular reactions to medications in order to take care of their health themselves in preference to depending upon often ineffective medical doctors.

In lecture after lecture she held up an ideal of intellectual growth and character development to be achieved by women's own efforts, an achievement which would not only admit them to the company of the greatest minds, but would help them become strong, resilient individuals capable of dealing with any problem. She was sure life would offer plenty of vicissitudes to test their capabilities.

Indeed she thought the world was harder for women than for men, and that they had greater need for strong characters. But, she assured her pupils, "as an intelligent being woman is not different from man," and she urged them to make their lives a constant refutation of the assertion that a woman must be ignorant in order to be useful.

She assured them that marriage was not essential to a productive life and that they should prepare to be self-supporting. "It is of great importance to our sex, that they be secured against the sad necessity of marrying for the sake of maintenance." In her novel *Ida Norman*, Phelps tended to dispose of husbands so that her exemplary women would have to rely upon themselves and, as she delicately put it, "exhibit masculine resolution at variance with the delicate susceptibility [sic] of [their] nature [s]." The only women in the novel who demonstrate force of character are those who had applied themselves to serious study, and had overcome some obstacle or misfortune.

She offered young women female models to admire and emulate, and advised them to search history for strong women. She told them they were responsible for the future of the Republic: "On [women] depend in great measure the destinies of nations, as well as of families." She praised famous women who were also distinguished for domestic virtues, and bowed regularly in the direction of society's definition of womanhood—"There is also a degree of delicacy expected from a lady in the use of her acquirements, which should not be lost sight of . . ." At the same time, she suggested ways to by-pass the constraints of social expectation:

Should you chance to become sufficiently acquainted with any branch of

science to enable you to impart information, I know of no law either of morality or propriety, which would be violated by your modestly communicating that knowledge to others, neither do I think any man of real science would be displeased to find a lady capable of supporting conversation on scientific subjects.²¹

Upon one occasion she waxed even bolder, and suggested how she had justified her own strong commitment to a public life.

The sphere of woman's duty is to be looked for in private and domestic life; and although she may and ought to do all in her power to elevate, refine, and embellish all that comes within her own circle, she should be cautious of suffering her desires to extend beyond it. If genius, circumstances of fortune, or I might better say, the providence of God, assigns to her a more public and conspicuous station she ought cheerfully to do all that her own powers, aided by the blessings of God, can achieve; and as far as human feelings will allow, act fearlessly of human censure, looking to a higher tribunal for the reward of her labors.²²

What could be a more effective rationale for leaving the "private and domestic life?" Neither genius nor the circumstances of fortune are easy to define, and the providence of God is almost impossible to argue with.

In the end, at least as important as her precepts was her example. Moving as she did, cheerfully and fearlessly in a "more public and conspicuous station," doing "all that her own powers . . . can achieve" she was still a respected and respectable lady. It was a complicated and demanding prescription she offered young women as she taught them to maintain the outward behavior of perfect ladies while building a strong individual personality, engaging in demanding intellectual endeavor, preparing for self-support, and adopting a life-long commitment to self education. Few people of either sex have the stamina to live up to all that Almira Phelps thought a woman ought to do.

Her lectures provide insight into the puzzling way many achieving nineteenth century women tended to present themselves. No reader of the numerous biographical statements such women wrote about themselves and each other can fail to be struck by what seems to be the hypocrisy of the surface presentation in which so many were described as gentle, good, pious, self-abnegating, and an inspiration to those who came within their orbit. Perhaps this relentless facade of propriety and success in the assigned woman's role was necessary protective coloration for any woman who wanted to do more than perform the duties of wife or mother or beloved maiden aunt. Almira Phelps pointed out in one lecture that the social expectations were apt to make women devious. Contemporary biographies of

achieving women suggest that the less one lived up to the prescriptions of true womanhood in daily life, the more one claimed to have done so for the record.

Neither in those documents of her own life which she permitted to survive nor in public statements to younger women did Phelps discuss the darker side of this effort to carry water on both shoulders, to be a true woman as society defined that condition and at the same time an independent achiever capable of shaping the society as well as of being shaped by it. Since there was no broad social support for ambition and achievement, women like Phelps and her sister reinforced each other and developed close relationships with younger women who followed their example and their advice. The didacticism and self-assurance noted by her critics may have stemmed in part from the insecurity which goes along with defying the cultural mores. The defensive tone of her notes about John Phelps' full support of her career, the care with which she shaped her biographical materials for public view, all point to the high cost of self-making. Yet the surviving evidence also indicates that her zest for life was far from destroyed by the Victorian context and it seems likely that whatever the cost, she felt it worthwhile. About all this, one can only speculate.

What is much clearer is that in her life and teaching she exemplified a truly self-made woman. In order to become one she had fulfilled all the social expectations summed up in the catch phrase "true womanhood": she was a wife and many times a mother; she was kind, compassionate and intensely pious; she chose outstanding men as mentors and flattered them by close attention. At the same time she had taken her destiny in hand, educated herself, developed administrative skills, created and run several institutions, spoken out on political and social questions, attained recognition from men as well as women, and—to top it off—made a fortune by her own exertions. "What our hands find to do let us do quickly. Let us apply ourselves to the work of improvement," she had told a group of women in Guilford in 1836.²³ It was the theme of her own life.

As a single case Almira Phelps' life would be interesting but perhaps not worth this much elaboration. Its significance lies in its exemplary nature: in the women she and her sister influenced to go and do likewise.²⁴ Tracing "influence" is a problematical thing, but we should note that beyond the considerable number of young women whom Phelps reached directly at Troy and Patapsco, *Lectures for Young Ladies* was many times reprinted, was required reading in many female seminaries, and was published in a special edition by the Massachusetts Board of Education for use in the public schools. Those who had ears to hear had a chance to learn what they wanted to know: how a woman could rise in the world. More did than we yet have any notion of, and with consequences for the society we can so far only dimly discern.

NOTES

1. In a number of studies Edward Pessen has demonstrated that most of the well-to-do in New York, Boston and Philadelphia in the "age of the common man" were far from common men, but had begun life in families of property and standing. See for example his *Riches, Class and Power Before the Civil War* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1973). See also Lee Soltow, *Men and Wealth in the United States 1850–1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).
2. Brief lives of all these men are in the *Dictionary of American Biography*. See also Jonathan Messerli, *Horace Mann* (New York: Knopf, 1972); Frederick Rudolph, *Mark Hopkins and the Log* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956); and for other examples, *The Remains of the Reverend James Marsh D.D. . . . with a memoir of his life* (Boston, 1943); Anne Eliot Ticknor, *Joseph Green Cogswell* (Cambridge, Mass., 1874); Vincent P. Laramie, ed., *Henry Barnard: American Educator* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1974). Edward Pessen warns me to be aware that I am talking about a tiny minority of all the young men alive in these years, though their part in shaping the emerging culture was out of proportion to their numbers.
3. Numbers of brief biographies of self-made women can be found in Frances Willard and Mary E. Livermore, *American Women: Fifteen Hundred Biographies*, 2 vols. (New York & Chicago, 1897); in Jennie June Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York, 1858); and in Edward and Janet James, eds., *Notable American Women*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971).
4. One incentive to the examination of Almira Phelps' life is this *sic transit gloria mundi* quality; another is the image created in the mind by her grandson's description of her at the age of 91: "Conscious of her own rectitude, she was always ready to lay down the law for others: her firmness and strong personality made her a leader in any circle in which she moved." See Emma Bolzau, *Almira Lincoln Phelps* (Philadelphia, 1936), p. 461.
5. The biographical information used here was collected forty years ago by an extraordinarily diligent scholar who compiled as complete a record as the surviving materials permit. See Bolzau, *Almira Lincoln Phelps*.
6. Except where otherwise indicated, the statements of fact in this section come from Bolzau.
7. "Mrs. Almira Lincoln Phelps," *American Journal of Education*, 17 (September 1868), an essay based on Mrs. Phelps' notes. The distinction between the summer school, usually attended by girls and taught by a woman, and the winter school attended by boys and young men who had been busy in the fields during the summer, may not be familiar to the twentieth century reader. In 1814 it was still unusual for a woman to teach the winter school.
8. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 38.
9. A. L. Phelps, *Reviews and Essays on Art, Literature and Science* (Philadelphia, 1873), p. 221.
10. *American Journal of Education*, p. 613.
11. Albertine A. N. de Saussure, *Progressive Education Commencing with the Infant* (Boston, 1835).
12. Phelps to Lydia Sigourney, October 16, 1838, Lydia Sigourney Papers, Connecticut Historical Society.
13. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 67.
14. Mrs. I. M. E. Blandin, *History of Higher Education of Women in the South Prior to 1860* (New York, 1910), p. 177; Letters of Congressman David Outlaw to his wife, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina; A. L. Phelps, *The Educator or Hours With My Pupils* (Philadelphia, 1859).
15. See Anne F. Scott, "What Then Is The American, This New Woman?" *Journal of American History*, 61 (December 1978): 679–703, for a description of this network.

16. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 366.
17. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 454; *Woman's Journal*, 1874, p. 84.
18. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 455.
19. The sources for what follows are Almira Lincoln Phelps' writings in which she offered guidance to young women: first, *The Female Student or Lectures for Young Ladies* (New York, 1836) which was made up of talks given at Troy Female Seminary in 1830–31. This volume was reissued in a series published by the Massachusetts Board of Education for use in all the public schools of that state. It went through nine editions, including three in England and was very widely read in female seminaries as well. *The Educator or Hours with My Pupils* was composed of similar talks given to her Patapsco pupils. Finally, *Ida Norman or Trials and Their Uses* (New York, 1855) purports to be a novel. Composed originally to be read aloud to pupils, it is a didactic moral tale, ludicrous in many of its characterizations and plot, but, revealing of her values and methods.
20. I have had many harsh thoughts about Mrs. Phelps' son Charles, who, after her death, burned the diary she had kept for 75 years. In light of this passage, however, I must concede that she may have told him to do it.
21. Phelps, *Lectures*, p. 275.
22. Phelps, *Lectures*, p. 395.
23. Almira Lincoln Phelps, "The Influence of Women on Society," *American Ladies Magazine*, 9 (1836), p. 563.
24. Anne Firor Scott, "The Ever-Widening Circle: The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary 1822–1872," *History of Education Quarterly*, 19 (Spring 1979): 3–25.

"Almira Lincoln Phelps" Twenty-five Years Later

It it was with considerable trepidation that I reread an article composed so long ago during what I now sometimes characterize as the naive stage of my life as an historian. To my surprise, except for some stylistic improvements, there is not much I would change today. Without dismay I would say that it did not receive the attention it deserved. Perhaps historians of women were off on other ventures in 1980. The idea of a "self-made woman" never made its way into the ordinary historical discourse, but the phenomenon still awaits its historian. Phelps was an unusually articulate example of the type, but there were many others whose stories, and whose influence on the rising generation, could be excavated.

Phelps did not avoid matrimony or childbearing as so many ambitious nineteenth century women did, but she did not let either slow her down much. Since so many such women were adept at devising what the CIA calls "cover," they may not be immediately recognizable. The rule should be not to attend to what they *say*, but to watch what they *do*.

I am delighted by this project to reprint articles from the archive of the *Maryland Historical Magazine* and hope that this time around some energetic young historians will be inspired to pick up where this piece leaves off and in so doing provide a fascinating expansion of the cultural history of American women.

ANNE FIROR SCOTT, 2005

From Party Tickets to Secret Ballots: The Evolution of the Electoral Process In Maryland During the Gilded Age

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In recent years, historians have significantly altered our understanding of Gilded Age politics. They have shifted the focus from party elites and national platforms to the mass constituencies of political parties and the social issues that animated them. They have carefully specified typologies of elections and subtly explored the creation of partisan cultures.¹ But the reexamination of the period's politics is incomplete without an analysis of the role of the electoral process itself. This subject involves a number of apparently mundane matters, such as selecting election officials, managing the polls, identifying qualified voters, overseeing the mode of voting, counting the ballots, and reporting the returns. But historians must not regard election machinery and electoral rules merely as givens. As politicians and their opponents recognized, the electoral structure both reflected and shaped politics and had significant practical consequences for voters, parties, and public policy. The evolution of the electoral process in Maryland during the Gilded Age demonstrates this important reality.

During the 1870s and 1880s the electoral process in Maryland was dominated by the political parties, operating within a loose legal framework that facilitated electoral abuses and controversy. In the first place, the election officials designated to oversee the polls—three judges and two clerks at each voting precinct—were appointed by partisan politicians who had a vested interest in the conduct of elections. In Maryland's counties the elected county commissioners selected such officials; in Baltimore, the responsibility was assigned to a board of elections supervisors appointed by the governor. Fairness was supposedly guaranteed by mandating that the party affiliation of one judge differ from that of his two colleagues, but this requirement was sometimes blatantly ignored or, more often, subtly subverted. Partisan Democratic supervisors, for example, frequently appointed as the putative Republican judge representing the minority party “Democrats in Republican disguise,” Republicans hostile to the ticket of their own party, or persons dependent on the goodwill of the Democratic officials for their occupation or liquor. As one Democratic elections supervisor admitted in 1885, his

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procedure was simply to appoint as judges "the two sharpest Democrats and the weakest Republican" he could find in each precinct. One Labor candidate for the Baltimore City Council in 1886 observed that many people thought the Board of Supervisors should be tarred and feathered for their choice of election judges. And a Republican candidate in the 16th ward withdrew on election eve because "The character of the judges appointed by the Board of Supervisors is such that it would be a waste of time and money . . . to remain in the field." He noted that in five precincts the Republican minority was represented by "notorious Democrats." Indeed, an investigation of the election judges in Baltimore in 1886 revealed so many with criminal records that one critic concluded that possession of such a record was "a qualification for the position of judge." These officials were required impartially to judge the qualifications of voters, maintain order at the polls, receive and count the ballots, and prepare the election certificates, but frequently their partisanship influenced their actions. The behavior of such officials was a constant source of controversy, particularly their refusal to prevent illegal voting by members of their own party.²

Their determination of an individual's right to vote on election day was supposedly guided by the voter registry completed weeks before by another official appointed in each district by the governor. As the governor during this period was invariably a Democrat, so were the voting registrars. Sitting in session in local communities several times a year, registrars recorded the names of voters who presented themselves as meeting the state's sex, age, and residency requirements for suffrage and supposedly struck from the books the names of those who had died or moved from the district since the last election. But the registrars were partisan officials, and as one of the main functions of the political party was to maximize the enrollment of its potential constituents, registrars not infrequently approached their work with a zealous partisanship. In 1885, for example, in nearly a third of Baltimore's 180 precincts, registrars recorded on the books more voters than a simultaneous police census found living in the precinct.³

The use determined party workers could make of such padded registry rolls is revealed in an incident during the 1879 election which also demonstrated the failure of partisan judges to conduct elections fairly. A small-time Baltimore politico took nine hoodlums from the Baltimore jail to the nearby village of Clarksville in Howard County. There he lined them up, he later recalled, "and we filed past the poll. Each dropped in his ballot. Then we kept going around in a circle, each of us putting a ballot in every time round, until we had polled several hundred votes. We voted until we had voted all the names on the register, and we could not do more than that, could we?"⁴

Not only could registrars thus provide opportunity for illegal repeat voting by members of their own party, they also could (and did) deflate the potential vote of their party's opponents, simply by illegally removing from the registry the

names of qualified voters. Judicial investigations, usually undertaken too late to have practical consequence for the election, frequently revealed such activities, particularly directed against black voters, who were assumed to be Republicans. Other voters found, to their dismay, that they had been stricken from the registry only when they attempted to vote or that, although still registered, someone else had already voted under their name. Not surprisingly, Republicans, Independent Democrats, and members of third parties like the Greenbackers all denounced Maryland's registration laws. "The registration laws of the State," declared the 1879 platform of the Independent Democrats, "instead of affording a protection against fraud, have been, by the criminal neglect of duty of many of the officers, used to perpetuate the greatest outrages against the purity of the ballot."⁵

One of the most important electoral processes, and the one that perhaps enabled political parties to exercise the most influence in shaping politics and political culture, involved the actual mode of voting. Although Maryland had long ago replaced *viva voce* voting with the use of ballots, the act of voting was still largely an open, not secret, one. There were no legal provisions to ensure secrecy and little practical attempt to provide it. Maryland's voters were required to carry their own ticket to a voting window, behind which sat the election officials. Standing in the street or on the steps or porch of the building housing the polls, in full view of all interested observers, the voter had to announce his name for the clerk to find on the registry and record on the poll list, and then hand his ballot through the window to the officials who were to deposit it in the unseen ballot box. The ballots were not provided by the election officials, and unlike other states Maryland had virtually no regulations specifying the format of the ballot to be used. In the absence of official machinery and legal regulations, the task of preparing and distributing ballots was assumed by the political parties. The natural consequence was the party ticket, a strip of paper usually headed by a party symbol, on which appeared the names of the candidates of only the party that issued it. Anxious to distinguish their followers and mobilize their support, party managers often differentiated their tickets from those of other parties by size, color, or other characteristics. Thus the voter's use of a ballot easily identified his choice of party as well.⁶

Partisan control of ballots also led to the appearance of "bogus ballots," tickets headed with the insignia of one party but listing the candidates of another. Bogus ballots were regularly issued by both major parties or factions thereof. All parties had to take elaborate precautions against the possibility of counterfeit tickets and constantly cautioned their partisans to scrutinize their tickets carefully before turning them in at the polls in order to avoid deception. The Washington County Republican Central Committee, for instance, warned party members in 1886 that "a large number of ballots" with a Republican heading but listing Democratic candidates "have been circulated with the intent to deceive voters." Conversely, in Allegany County, tickets purporting to be Democratic were issued

with Republican candidates' names. "Examine your tickets carefully," the *Cumberland Times* urged its Democratic readers. "Beware of fraudulent tickets." In Baltimore, a favorite Democratic tactic was to circulate tickets among black voters listing Democratic nominees under a portrait of Abraham Lincoln or U. S. Grant. Local party organizations also sometimes deceived their own followers by the practice of "knifing" or "trading." This involved replacing a regular nominee with the favorite of another faction or even with the candidate of another party, sometimes out of spite or jealousy, sometimes for monetary reward. In the 1879 election in Anne Arundel County, for instance, the Democrats in charge of printing the party's tickets substituted the name of the Republican candidate for county commissioner for the Democratic nominee, reflecting and continuing a factional feud within the party.⁷

The unregulated private preparation of tickets also produced the famous "pudding tickets." These were tickets much shorter and narrower than usual and printed on tissue paper, which were folded inside a regular ticket to permit multiple voting. The skilled voter could even crimp his ticket with accordion folds, as a fan, with a pudding ticket concealed in each fold; the skilled election judge, in depositing the ticket in the ballot box, could fan it out and cause the different pudding tickets to fall out and mix with other tickets already cast. In Baltimore's 1875 election, these tissue pudding tickets accounted for the discrepancy in one precinct between the 542 voters recorded on the poll list and the 819 ballots counted out of the box.⁸

The distribution and use of party tickets further prevented secrecy while facilitating voter intimidation and election fraud. The tickets were distributed or "peddled" to the party's supporters by paid party workers known as peddlers, hawkers, holders, or bummers, who stationed themselves near the polls and pressed their tickets on prospective voters. These contending hawkers, each trying to force his ticket upon the voter, contributed greatly to the tumult and chaos surrounding the polls on election day. At times workers of one party completely thronged the polls and allowed only their own partisans to approach the ticket window, driving from the vicinity the hawkers of the other party and, with them, the possibility of votes for that party. Although the widespread and often fatal violence that characterized Baltimore's elections during the Know-Nothing period was not repeated, election day riots and disorder remained common as competing gangs attacked (and sometimes still murdered) voters, assaulted election officials, and even stormed the voting window to stuff the ballot box, a tactic known as "rushing" or "crowding" votes. Such "rushing" in Baltimore's 1875 election, for instance, placed in some ballot boxes large rolls of tickets that had never been separated and distributed but that "appeared in shape as they came from the printing press." What the *Frederick Citizen* called "radical bulldozing" of voters was commonplace, as voters were forced to reveal their tickets before being al-

lowed to reach the voting window. Receiving party tickets in such an atmosphere, the voter often had little or no time to examine his ballot before being hustled to the window. Certainly he rarely had an opportunity to alter the ballot received and vote a split ticket by crossing out the name of an unacceptable candidate and substituting that of a more agreeable one in his place.⁹

One other way that party leaders mobilized a full vote for their party under these conditions involved vote-buying. The use of party tickets and the lack of secrecy insured that a purchased vote was delivered, and the buyer might also accompany the seller to the voting window to observe him submit the ticket. Party officials regarded vote buying as a routine and necessary campaign tactic. One observer noted the interaction of party tickets, hawkers, vote-buying, and election day violence in describing the typical election day scenes in Washington County:

What we see in Hagerstown is a ward worker off at some distance negotiating with a rounder. A group of men, or maybe one or two standing off and refusing to vote until they have been "seen." Then comes a politician to the window holding a floater by the arm and making him vote the ticket he has just given him. Or it may be that a politician on the other side claims this particular floater and grabs him by the other arm and thrusts a different ticket into his hands and then a struggle ensues, in which frequently the whole crowd becomes involved, and it becomes a question of physical strength which party shall receive this free and enlightened vote. It may be that the floater is a negro, in the hands of a Democrat, and then there is sure to be a riot. The unfortunate voter is in that case set upon by those of his own color.

The scene varied little "in the country districts" around Hagerstown, only in that the vote sellers stood "a little nearer to the voting window" and that "the men who are holding off, waiting to be "fixed," make less 'bones' about it."¹⁰

One final feature of Maryland's electoral process involved the Federal Elections Law. Although usually incorrectly regarded as part of Reconstruction legislation, this statute—enacted in 1871 and not repealed until 1894—responded to election fraud in the North and was designed to end impersonation, repeating, intimidation, and bribery in congressional elections. It authorized the appointment of federal supervisors and of deputy marshals to assist the supervisors and maintain order. Of course, federal supervision was limited only to congressional elections and did not cover mayoral, legislative, or state elections held in odd-numbered years, and its effects were controversial. Maryland Republicans contended that the federal law limited election fraud. And, indeed, the U.S. Supreme Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of the act involved the convic-

tion of Baltimore judges for resisting the authority of federal supervisors who tried to stop them from stuffing the ballot box.¹¹

Maryland Democrats, on the other hand, charged that the federal law actually encouraged fraud. As the deputies were federal appointees, they were nearly invariably Republican. Indeed, deputies were usually chosen from lists supplied by local Republican party officials. Democrats maintained that such deputies intimidated potential Democratic voters, particularly immigrants. The number of deputies was often quite large, as in Baltimore in 1876, when more than one thousand two hundred deputies were appointed. At times such deputies served on election day virtually as Republican party workers. As the *Hagerstown Mail* declared, "We all know that Federal Election Supervisors are merely Republican hustlers. "In session after session, Maryland's Democratic-controlled legislature appropriated money to defend state election officials charged with violating the federal election law or with obstructing federal election officials.¹²

These public and partisan aspects of Maryland's electoral process helped to shape the state's political culture during this period, with its strongest partisan commitments and identifications among the electorate, high levels of voter mobilization and participation, straight-ticket voting, and dramatic campaign techniques. The giant rallies, uniformed marches, and other features of "army-style" campaigns were designed to motivate an electorate that necessarily had to regard voting as a public act involving the affirmation of group solidarity. To print and distribute tickets and organize voters for participation, parties had to develop the "machines" that constituted such a major feature of the period's political culture.¹³

The evolution of Maryland's electoral process during the Gilded Age was fitful and contentious. Most people could and did agree publicly upon the necessity for controlling violence and disorder during elections, and so it was with little difficulty, if surprisingly gradually, that the General Assembly passed laws disarming the electorate by prohibiting the carrying of guns, dirks, razors, billies, and bludgeons on election days: in Kent, Montgomery, and Queen Anne's counties in 1874, in Prince George's County in 1884, in Calvert County in 1886.¹⁴ In most other respects, however, the subject of election "reform" was a highly charged one, for the objectives and implications of procedural change were controversial and momentous. A variety of groups, all critical of the election machinery but with quite different motivations, led in the agitation for election reform: Republicans, patrician mugwumps, labor organizers, third party radicals, and conservative businessmen.

The Republican interest, at least, was obvious: Republicans were convinced that without election reform and effective bipartisan administration of the election machinery they would never be able to oust the entrenched Democratic party. Denouncing elections in Maryland under Democratic control of the election machinery as "a burlesque upon republican institutions," Republican platforms re-

peatedly demanded the enactment of laws to "secure an honest registry, a free vote, and a fair count." State Chairman H. C. Naill bitterly declared in 1886, "if the election system is rendered insecure by corrupting and polluting the ballot-box by fraud, the will of the people is circumvented, and the ballot-box, instead of reflecting the will of the people, becomes an instrumentality by which their will is absolutely silenced."¹⁵

Nominally nonpartisan and professedly disinterested, Maryland's small contingent of mugwumps constituted a second group that persistently demanded election reform. Their complaint, however, while couched in denunciations of election fraud, was actually directed against the political party and its function as a mobilizer of the popular will, undermining the public influence they felt they deserved. Thus in demanding electoral reform, they were interested not in democratizing the political system but the reverse. A self-conscious and elitist minority, sharing inherited social status, established economic position, and educational and professional interests, the mugwumps valued order, deference, and stability. Holding elitist views of the mass electorate as ignorant, venal, and incompetent, mugwumps were appalled by the ascendancy of mass political parties. The positive functions such parties fulfilled—mobilizing voters, recruiting candidates, and representing group values—they regarded as loathsome and dangerous. Party control of election machinery, they believed, stimulated political organization, developed politicians and party workers into a distinct class, and reinforced the electorate's partisan loyalties. The mugwumps' typical reform objectives, grandly styled as "good government," were accordingly restrictive, designed primarily to weaken the political influence of the masses and of the political party that functioned to mobilize the popular will. In particular they condemned the party-ticket system. By permitting parties to print and distribute their own tickets at the polls, it required parties to collect large sums of money and create large and disciplined organizations or "machines." The money needed to prepare ballots and hire ticket peddlers in every election district provided parties with the excuse for the assessment of candidates, which in turn led the unscrupulous partisan, once elected, to use his public office to recoup his political expenses at the cost of the taxpayer, a process the mugwumps termed "the cycle of corruption."¹⁶

Maryland's mugwumps, led by the "peacock of Park Avenue," Charles J. Bonaparte, organized themselves into two major and overlapping groups, the Civil Service Association of Maryland and the Baltimore Reform League, virtually a who's who of the city's social register. Because of the Democratic dominance of state and city politics, they directed their energies at attacking the Democratic party organization, personified by state "boss" Senator Arthur P. Gorman and Baltimore City "boss" Isaac Rasin. They prided themselves that their attacks on electoral corruption produced among these Democratic politicians "rancorous and unremitting hostility, varied by occasional exhibitions of abject terror." The

persistent class animus of such reformers was always obvious, as when they condemned the appointment as election officials of "drivers of hacks, peanut vendors"—people "whose very occupations . . . rendered their appointment a simple outrage." They demanded instead the appointment of election supervisors only "from the business community, who have neither the ambitions nor the temptations" of politicians.¹⁷

Not surprisingly, the mugwumps often found common cause with the Independent Democrats, a group of conservative Democrats based in the Baltimore business community, led most prominently by John K. Cowen of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Their program resembled that of the mugwumps in condemning "machine politics" and "corrupt elections" and in advocating election reform and civil service. Their objectives, if different, were no more disinterested. Such reforms, they believed, would weaken the regular party organization by restricting its patronage, its control over nominations and thus public policy, and its capacity to mobilize Maryland's farmers and workers at the polls. Their ultimate motive was revealed in a public address they issued in 1887: "It is by power wielded through these fraudulent elections," they asserted, that the regular Democrats established public policy and levied taxes for "jobs and corrupt expenditures." What the Independents wanted was to reduce their existing taxes and prevent the adoption of any additional tax legislation. Indeed, the Independents' periodic crusades against "ring rule" paralleled the regular Democrats' periodic attempts to achieve tax reform in response to the complaints of farmers and workers. The Independents' opposition to tax reform reflected their determination to maintain the tax exemptions for corporations for which Maryland was notorious—"Cowenism," declared one regular Democrat, stood for the "aggrandizement of corporate influence in the State and nation"—and to preserve the immunity from taxation of other forms of business property. It took the form of an argument to restrict the functions of government, which they believed had been unnecessarily inflated by a party machine too responsive to the lower classes in its determination to win elections. R. E. Wright, a prominent Baltimore merchant, for instance, complained of the city's "rapidly enlarging and dangerous proletariat" which, because it was mobilized for elections by the regular party organization, required appeasement by the subsequent adoption of extravagant public expenditures and by representation on the public payroll. "Our complaint," declared Wright to the Landlords Mutual Protective Association, "*is that there is a party.*"

Such conservative Democrats wanted to replace party-based government with a government run "like a business," with appointed officials motivated by "efficiency." "Our offices must no longer be scrambled for at every election, nor handed about as bribes," declared Cowen. A limited, efficient, and nonpartisan government would require less taxation and minimize the need for the more equitable tax laws that would reach their exempt intangible properties such as rents and

mortgages. A report by Johns Hopkins University economist Richard Ely to the 1888 Maryland Tax Commission, recommending that the state shift to corporate and income taxes and the city to taxes levied on realty and business rents, particularly prompted business groups to invoke the issue of election reform to cover their objective of preserving their vested economic interests. Not surprisingly, the Landlords Mutual Protective Association was a major advocate of election reform. If revenue were needed, Cowen told an enthusiastic meeting of the Landlords Association, it should come not from taxation on businesses but from high license fees on saloons, a tactic that would force the city's lower classes to fund the government expenditures their presence demanded as well as weaken the regular party organization that depended upon saloons as organizing bases. "But to obtain these or other reforms," Cowen told the businessmen, "we should direct our efforts primarily to the enactment" of new election laws.¹⁹

In similarly attacking election fraud, machine rule, and the existing electoral system, third parties and labor organizations had still different objectives. Not surprisingly, labor organizations particularly condemned the intimidation of workers' voting by their employers under the system of open voting. Some labor leaders complained of intimidation by the workers' other "master, the political boss, . . . the ward-heeler." Improved conditions for the working class, it was argued, required the emancipation of the worker from the domination of either master. Greenbackers, Industrials, Prohibitionists, and other third-party groups all criticized the party-ticket system because of the hardships it imposed on small parties, thereby limiting their possible influence. The printing and distributing of ballots was expensive, excluding poor citizens from nomination and influence over public policy; the system also required a uniform organization across all election districts—something few third parties had—if every voter was to have an opportunity to vote his principles. Paying for the printing of tickets and their distribution at every polling place by hawkers was effectively beyond the reach of small third parties. Each major party spent \$7,000–\$8,000 per election on printing and distributing ballots and paying challengers in Baltimore's 180 precincts, but the total campaign funds collected by the Industrial Party for the city's 1886 election was only \$196.30. As a consequence, third parties often had no one in some precincts to distribute their tickets, which limited the possibility of their attracting votes. Labor parties and Prohibitionists sometimes took out advertisements in the newspapers directing their prospective voters to homes and offices where their tickets would be available, a necessary tactic that increased the "costs" of voting for their followers.²⁰

Third parties also complained about partisan control of election machinery. In 1877, for instance, candidates and supporters of the Workingmen's Party maintained that Democratic election judges in Baltimore cheated them out of victories in thirteen wards through ballot-box stuffing, intimidation of voters, and exclud-

ing their representatives from the windows and from witnessing the count. "We are called defeated," said one, "not defeated but defrauded." In the 1886 election, the Industrial Party, based on the Knights of Labor, similarly charged the election officials with miscounting, ballot-box stuffing, interference with voting and with witnessing the count, and destruction of the Industrial tickets, distinctive by their hickory tree symbol. Moreover, in working class wards Democratic election officials tried to minimize the potential vote for the Industrials by placing the voting windows out of reach of the voters. In one precinct of the third ward, for example, the Industrials had to build a platform so that their supporters could reach the voting window; in another precinct, voters had to climb a ladder to reach the window nine feet above the street. Other third parties, including the Prohibitionists, also regularly complained that election officials did not count their votes as cast. Greenback-Laborites reflected a common third-party interest, then, in their 1879 platform demand for election laws giving all parties, not just the two major ones, a judge and clerk at each poll and requiring party approval of their appointment in order to prevent the selection of bogus or renegade representatives.²¹

In advocating election reform, then, workers and political radicals, whether organized as interest groups or separate political parties, sought to democratize the electoral process and secure both equal political participation and legitimate and responsive republican government.

Despite their varying objectives, Republicans, mugwumps, conservative businessmen, labor organizations, and third parties all agreed on the necessity of electoral reform and agitated constantly for it. Frequently, they engaged in joint political activity and even, at times, campaigns, recognizing fusion as the only practical method of defeating the dominant Democratic organization. Independent Democrats and Republicans fused in 1875, for instance. In 1886 Republicans endorsed Industrial candidates in some wards and Independent Democrats in others. Some labor unions (like the Cigarmakers Union) endorsed the Independent Democrats. Mugwump lawyers from the Baltimore Reform League provided legal guidance to labor parties on the subject of election laws, and labor leaders encouraged the League's investigations of election officials for fraud. "Keep it up!" declared the *Baltimore Critic*, the leading labor newspaper. "We must have square men in the polling-places to secure square voting."²²

Popular anger over election practices reached a new height as a consequence of blatant fraud in the 1886 elections, which left the Democrats still in power but in a critical situation. The Reform League obtained the prosecution and conviction of numerous Democratic election judges for fraud in a series of trials holding public attention for months. The Knights of Labor, complaining bitterly of illegal Democratic manipulation of the labor vote, seemed ready to challenge the party's traditional hold over Baltimore's working class. Conservative Democrats, led by Cowen, again seized the emotional issue of election fraud as an attractive cover

for their demand for a party reorganization on the basis of opposition to tax reform and business regulation. And Republicans, seeking to capitalize on public sentiment and attract the Independents' support, campaigned in 1887 on "fair elections" as "the paramount issue before the people of this State," demanding the enactment of a sweeping election bill prepared by the Reform League and avoiding any mention of tax reassessment.²³

The Democratic organization responded to this challenge by making accommodations in an effort to retain its electoral coalition. Earlier it had appealed to its critical agrarian/labor wing by enacting tax and labor reform laws and by accepting minor modifications in election laws. Now, although again promising economic reforms, it shifted its emphasis to the elections issue and proposed major changes to head off the popular outcry. The party's 1887 state convention conceded that existing election laws were "ineffectual to accomplish . . . fair elections" and pledged the 1888 legislature to reform registry and election laws, appointing a committee to prepare such legislation immediately.²⁴

With election reform "almost the sole issue" in the 1887 campaign, Democrats narrowly defeated the fusion of Republicans and Independent Democrats and entered the 1888 legislature with both clear pledges to fulfill and a conviction that party interests dictated limits to electoral reform. They modified the registry law for Baltimore to provide bipartisan registrars and biennial registration, at the precinct rather than the ward level, but they rejected the Reform League demand for annual registration because of the expense and effort it would have imposed on the party. They also altered the election laws to require minority representation among Baltimore's Elections Supervisors and not merely among the election judges and clerks the supervisors appointed. In order to prevent the two supervisors representing the Democratic majority from imposing bogus or renegade Republican election officials on the supervisor representing the minority Republican Party, the law gave each supervisor a veto over the appointment of such precinct officials. Election judges and clerks were finally required to be able to read and write English and to be "skilled" in arithmetic, the lack of which qualifications had often produced misunderstandings and errors which appeared to patrician critics to be as fraudulent as the deliberate falsification of ballots and counting. New laws also required glass ballot boxes in order to prevent ballot-box stuffing and authorized each party to have a representative in the polling room to watch the casting and count of the vote.²⁵

The Baltimore Reform League praised Democrats for these laws but remained unsatisfied, demanding voter registration annually in the city and quadrennially in the counties and the abolition of "the unhappy practice of voting through a window," which prevented strict surveillance of election officials. The failure to adopt these changes, declared the Civil Service Reformer, was "precisely in the direction in which the professional ballot box stuffer or false counter of votes

would desire to remain unhampered by prohibitory or restrictive enactments." Moreover, the League was outraged that the new registry law repealed the 1882 provision that had permitted interested citizens to appeal to the courts against the registration of other voters. The League had repeatedly used that power to challenge the actions of registrars and to remove illegally registered names from the rolls. Mugwump anger increased upon discovery that a score of election judges awaiting trial for fraud had escaped prosecution when the legislature repealed the law under which they had been indicted and then re-enacted it without providing for pending prosecutions. When Democratic Governor Elihu Jackson pardoned other election judges and clerks convicted earlier for fraud, mugwumps were convinced that the Democratic party remained under boss control. Moreover, workers still sought assurance of their ability to wield political influence without interference, Independent Democrats remained hostile to the regular organization, and Republicans still sought victory at the polls.²⁶

After the 1888 legislative session, all such electoral reformers focused their activities on ballot reform and the achievement of the Australian ballot. An examination of the process by which Maryland secured this law demonstrates the interaction between political conditions and electoral change, the continued partisan features of electoral legislation, and the growing role of the state in the electoral process. First adopted in Australia in 1856, this new voting system differed completely from the party-ticket system. In particular, reformers were attracted by three features of the Australian system. First, it provided an "official" ballot, prepared and distributed by public authorities; it therefore stripped parties of one of their most influential organizational functions and promised dramatically to alter campaign practices by abolishing the disruptive ticket peddlers. Theoretically this feature also made it easier for independent organizations and candidates by minimizing their election costs and reducing their dependence on party organizations for nominations, while it removed the parties' rationale for assessing their nominees and thus eliminated a major source of corrupt funds. Electoral corruption was also to be eliminated by a second characteristic of the Australian ballot: it was secret and therefore presumably discouraged vote buying while providing workers with "an escape from the dictation and prying eyes of employers and overseers." Finally, it was a consolidated or "blanket" ballot, listing all candidates instead of only those of one party. This provision permitted more independent and split-ticket voting than was possible under the party-ticket system and seemed likely to weaken party control over the electorate, a prime objective of most reformers.²⁷

Election reformers eagerly championed this new system. Labor organizations were the most active in promoting its popular acceptance. The Maryland Labor Conference raised the subject in its 1888 meeting and encouraged public discussion. The Knights of Labor, in particular, agitated for legislative action, drawing

up a model ballot law for the next legislature to consider.²⁸ In 1889, the mugwumps of the Reform League also drafted an election bill, although rather than requiring a blanket ballot it provided for separate party ballots from which the voter would select in secret. This adaptation reflected the mugwump conviction that the Australian ballot would effectively disfranchise illiterate voters. Whereas mugwumps in other states, particularly those with large immigrant populations, praised the Australian system precisely for its possible disfranchising effect on illiterates, in Maryland a substantial portion of the illiterate population consisted of blacks whose votes, mugwumps realized, were essential to any possible election victory of a fusion coalition. Both Republicans and Independent Democrats reached the same conclusion and accordingly euphemistically endorsed those aspects of the Australian system which were "appropriate" for Maryland.²⁹

Even many partisan Democrats joined in the demand for ballot reform. Among them was a new group, the Democratic Business Men's Association of Baltimore, which although opposed to the party machine refused to desert the party and join in the fusion of Independent Democrats and Republicans. They did, however, appoint a committee to draw up an Australian bill and to lobby for its enactment. Still another ballot bill was prepared by Kent County Democratic legislator J. A. Pearce. He feared that election reform might permit Republicans to gain more power but declared, "I cannot fail to perceive the terrible and growing evil of fraudulent registration, voting, and election returns; nor the inevitable certainty with which it is converting the Democratic majority of Maryland into a minority . . . we must correct this evil at any cost, . . . the ultimate permanence of our party can only be secured in this way."³⁰

In 1889, as in 1887, the issue of election reform dominated the Maryland political campaign. Believing that electoral success again depended on a strong stand in favor of election reform, Democrats pledged in their state platform to enact laws to preserve "the purity of the ballot box" by preventing bribery, fraud, and corruption. Republicans found it necessary to concede in their own platform, adopted the following week, "that the great bulk of our fellow Democratic citizens" desired election reform but denied that "their party leaders share this desire, or propose voluntarily to relinquish the unworthy practices to which they have so often owed their power." Thus they too endorsed ballot reform as did the Independent Democrats in their platform.³¹ Uncomfortable with the process of significant electoral reform, however, Gorman also sought to emphasize the reactionary purposes of the Independent Democrats, whom he attacked as "selfish men, identified with corporate greed." The fusion movement, Senator Gorman maintained, was "a corrupt scheme of Mr. Cowan's to get possession of the Legislature in the interest of the B&O R. R. Company, and to prevent its tax exemptions from being interfered with."³²

Gorman's lack of commitment to the party's campaign pledge for election reform was dramatically revealed after the 1889 election gave the Democrats solid

control of the new state legislature to meet in 1890. Calling the state's Democratic editors to a meeting in Baltimore, Gorman denounced the Australian ballot as a threat to the party, saying it should be titled "A bill to throw the Democratic Party in the rear," and urged the editors to oppose the measure. Some editors agreed. The *Cumberland Times*, for example, ardently argued Gorman's position in an editorial entitled "Ballot Reform—Its Real and Apparent Friends." Declaring that Americans were more united on the necessity of election reform than any other subject, the *Times* insisted that Gorman favored ballot reform but not the Australian system. Gorman's opposition, the paper asserted, stemmed from "the extreme liability of the illiterate and unfortunately educated voter to practical disfranchisement under the provisions for secret voting and an absolute and exclusively official ballot" and from his concern to protect the political rights of the common people. Gorman himself declared, "the system that removes the voter from influences of men of intelligence to a box leaves him to the danger of the money power. You pay a voter, if you pay him at all, in secret. By the [Australian] system he is exposed to the corrupt influences of bribery more than ever."³³

Most Democrats, however, rejected Gorman's position. The *Hagerstown Mail*, *Salisbury Advertiser*, *Cecil Democrat*, and other newspapers insisted that the party fulfill its campaign pledges and enact the Australian system to prevent bribery and fraud. "Then, and not until then, will we cease to hear of independent movements and fusion with the Republicans." Democratic alliances throughout the state also revealed rank-and-file support for the Australian ballot. In Hagerstown, for example, a rally "representing every shade of opinion in the Democratic Party" unanimously demanded the Australian ballot and sent delegations to Annapolis to lobby the Democratic legislators to fulfill their pledges. As for workers, labor organizations sharply rejected Gorman's expressed concerns. The *Baltimore Critic* reminded Gorman that the Knights of Labor were among the most vociferous advocates of the Australian system, and another labor editor declared that by "men of intelligence" Gorman meant "ward boss, foreman, and superintendent": Gorman sought not to protect workers' political rights but to retain Democratic control of Baltimore.³⁴

Having failed to divert popular sentiment for the Australian system, Gorman and the regular Democratic organization next attempted to use their control of the legislature to frustrate it. The senate elections committee put aside the numerous Australian bills introduced and reported a "sham bill," which the *Hagerstown Mail* declared should have been titled "A bill to protect the Bosses in suppressing the voice of the people." This measure, endorsed by Gorman and other regulars who had earlier announced their opposition to the Australian system, provided for separate ballots for each party rather than a blanket ballot. It failed in so many other respects to provide for the Australian system that one reporter described it "as full of loopholes as a shad seine."³⁵ Again there was a popular reac-

tion. The *Critic* described the senate committee bill as “a farce and a fraud,” and labor organizations took the lead in demanding an authentic Australian system. The Knights’ District Assembly denounced the legislature for considering this “miserable substitution” and demanded enactment of their own ballot bill. “Never did public sentiment appeal more unanimously for a law,” concluded a reporter for a New York newspaper. Democratic regulars retreated, reviving the Australian ballot bill prepared by the Democratic Business Men’s Association, which they amended and promptly enacted into law. Although it applied to only fourteen of Maryland’s counties, it represented the adoption of the state’s modern system of voting.³⁶

Significantly, however, the Republican legislators, after clamoring for the Australian ballot, voted against the measure while regular Democrats supported its passage—suggesting that in their amendments the Democrats had learned how to shape the Australian system to their own purpose. Indeed, it is inaccurate to conclude, as some political scientists have done, that the adoption of the Australian ballot ended the previous practice of manipulating the electoral framework for partisan purposes. Although labor reformers, mugwumps, conservative businessmen, and political radicals had led the movement for ballot reform, the actual law was shaped and enacted by practical politicians who understood the electorate and how election machinery influenced political outcomes. The law derived from political conflict; not surprisingly, it also reflected it. “In matters of (electoral) legislation,” one newspaper later concluded, “the ‘professionals’ beat the amateurs every day.”³⁷

In the first place, the legislature attempted to retain some of the familiar partisan features of the old ballot system while providing the secret and official characteristics of the new. Rather than adopting an office-bloc ballot format, which would minimize partisanship and encourage split-ticket voting, the Maryland law adopted the party-column format. This grouped candidates by parties in parallel columns, at the head of which appeared party vignettes to enable the voter to distinguish the separate party slates. The new law, moreover, provided that a single mark by a vignette would constitute a vote for the entire party ticket, and thus it facilitated straight-ticket voting and minimized the demands placed upon the partisan voter.³⁸

Second, the law attempted to promote the particular interests of the dominant Democratic party. It authorized the governor, rather than county commissioners, to appoint a Board of Election Supervisors in each county. Although such three-member boards were to have minority representation, this measure gave the Democrats control of the election machinery in every county, including those which formerly had been controlled by Republicans because of local political alignments. Next, the law authorized the appointment of state election police equal to the number of federal supervisors and deputies at each polling place. Regarding the federal election officials as “merely Republican hustlers,” the Demo-

crats seized the chance to offset them with state-appointed Democratic hustlers. But, of course, as the *Civil Service Reformer* observed bitterly, the Australian system was purportedly designed, by providing for public distribution of tickets, to eliminate hustlers, not to provide for them legally and at public not party expense. Since no qualifications, not even residency, were required of such election police, this provision seemed to improve Democratic opportunities to control voting while shifting party campaign expenses to the public. Another provision of the new law also seemed to provide opportunities for Democratic party workers to continue to influence voters. This authorized foreign-born voters (but not illiterate blacks likely to vote Republican) to be accompanied by a friend at the polls. Not only mugwumps and Republicans but many Democrats viewed this provision as a means to facilitate vote buying and other fraud.³⁹

Nor were third parties like the Prohibitionists altogether pleased with the legislation they had long demanded. Although it did authorize each party to have a challenger in the polling room, it also explicitly excluded third parties from being represented among the ballot clerks and practically excluded them from serving as election supervisors and judges by not explicitly providing for them. Moreover, while the law mandated printing and distributing ballots at public expense, thereby removing one of the major difficulties third parties had faced under the former ballot system, it also established rules for parties to gain access to those ballots. For existing parties, the rules were nominal but still restrictive: such parties must have received one percent of the vote in the preceding election. For new parties or independents, however, nomination and placement on the legal ballot required filing with public officials a petition of registered voters, with the number of signatures necessary ranging from two hundred to five hundred depending upon the office sought. An inability to meet those requirements, because of time, organization, or finances, effectively eliminated such citizens from equal participation in Maryland's elections, for the Australian ballot law prohibited the resort to ballots not sanctioned and issued by the state. One of Gorman's Democratic followers had earlier objected to the Australian system because it involved "the imperial coercion by the State of the voter's will in requiring the use of a single form of ballot." Such rhetoric reflected the Democratic image as the party of "personal liberty," but the practical effect of this concern would be felt by citizens of other partisan inclination.⁴⁰

Finally, the Australian law also assigned to the state other powers of "coercion" over matters that formerly had been left to political parties or individual citizens. It authorized election supervisors to decide which group was entitled to party names and ballot vignettes when claimed by more than one group. This served to regularize the electoral process by removing some of the confusion possible under the old system and limited the possibility that a bolting faction of a party—such as the Independent Democrats—would be able to appropriate the

advantages of the party's traditional symbolism. The law also discouraged factionalism and strengthened the regular party machinery by requiring that the nomination papers of candidates be signed by the regular officers of the party convention. By preventing the printing and issuance of "bogus tickets," moreover, the Australian system gave the regular party organization increased control over local party officials and the ability to impose its will on conflicting groups, an instance of the law's ability to strengthen the "machine."⁴¹

Republicans, Independents, and Laborites were not satisfied with this ballot legislation but did support it as a great improvement over the previous system. The depth of Republican discontent was revealed, however, during the fall campaign when party officials filed suit against the law, challenging its constitutionality on technical grounds related to the circumstances of its passage and because it did not apply to all counties. Their real objection, however, was against the provision that empowered the governor to choose election supervisors. Under the previous arrangement of having the county commissioners appoint election judges, Republicans had controlled the election machinery in several counties, particularly in Western Maryland. Expediently employing traditional Democratic rhetoric in an effort to protect this partisan advantage, Republicans condemned this new provision as "a flagrant act of centralization and partisanship" which "cheated the people by robbing the counties of their right of self-government." The Democratic State Committee retained counsel to assist the state's attorney general in defending the law before the courts. Mugwumps and Democrats of all opinions were appalled at "the Republican assault" upon the Australian ballot, regarding the matter as "a political case, instituted for party purposes strictly," and revealing "a good deal of hypocrisy in this Republican cry for ballot reform." The *Sun* insisted that Republicans relied on bribery and intimidation to retain the votes of blacks and Western Maryland miners, respectively, and therefore opposed secret voting. "Yoked in an unholy alliance with the employing corporations, the Republican party is opposed to the enfranchisement of the workingman, the freedom and secrecy of the ballot."⁴²

Maryland's courts also rejected Republican arguments and upheld the Australian ballot law, clearing the way for the first election to be held under its provisions. To prepare the electorate for the new style of voting, both Democrats and Republicans organized campaign schools to instruct voters in the use of the new ballot. Party officials taught voters to select the right column by recognizing the party vignettes—the Democratic rooster, liberty tree, or Andrew Jackson portrait, depending on the voting district; the various pictures of Lincoln used by the Republicans; the Prohibitionist rose or flag. They carefully explained how to mark the ballots, a voter's task that had been not only unnecessary but actually discouraged under the party-ticket system. Finally, to overcome popular apprehension about being "shut up in a box" to vote, both major parties constructed voting

booths and carried them around the state to illustrate the new system of voting at each political rally. Party newspapers also used the campaign to educate the voters, printing facsimiles of the official ballot and detailed directions on how to vote.⁴³

The 1890 election itself brought general satisfaction with the new system. Although many voters approached the Australian ballot experience and especially the booths "with trepidation," most were pleased. The major complaint in Baltimore was about the smallness of the voting compartments. "But even the worst booth," declared the *Baltimore American*, "was a great advance over the old system, where the voter was assailed by (party) workers and crowded by ticket holders and made generally uncomfortable." Because the law prohibited electioneering within sixty feet of the polls, moreover, "it was one of the most quietly conducted elections ever held in Baltimore." In the counties, voters and observers also rejoiced over the new system of voting. "It is the first time a poor and timid man could go up and vote as the equal of the greatest," announced one Western Maryland newspaper. "It is the first time there was no collaring or hustling or intimidating. The vote is a free and true expression of the popular will." The *Hagerstown Mail* concluded, "The most popular institution in Maryland at this time is the Australian ballot law."⁴⁴

There remained problems, of course. Secret voting did not altogether end election bribery but merely required a change in tactics. Because the briber could no longer be assured that the vote was delivered, he now bribed opposing voters not to vote. "This method of bribery is rendered necessary by the Australian Ballot law," declared one observer, and the cost increased to \$7–\$10 per voter.⁴⁵ In "the Bohemian districts" and other ethnic precincts in Baltimore, moreover, there was little secrecy in voting, and often Democratic workers still guided voters to the polls and controlled the conduct of the election. Labor groups, especially the Knights of Labor, complained that the voting compartments were too small to adequately shield the voter from observation and immediately began to lobby for larger and improved booths in order to prevent observation and guarantee secrecy in voting.⁴⁶

Because of popular satisfaction with the Australian system, Democratic Governor Elihu Jackson recommended in 1891 that the law be extended to all counties with proper revisions to accommodate the complaints. The Democratic-dominated Maryland legislature of 1892 promptly adopted legislation accomplishing these purposes but also seized the occasion to make further revisions in the ballot law that again demonstrated both the law's ability to achieve partisan purposes and the ironic effects of ballot "reform" upon its original advocates. Whereas ballot reformers had viewed the Australian system as a way to facilitate independent and third-party nominations and to guarantee independence to the voter, the Democrats now used the law to prevent both objectives.⁴⁷

These revisions reflected political developments in the 1891 campaign. The first was the unprecedented political activity of Maryland's farmers, organized into the militant Farmers' Alliance. They were largely responsible for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination of Frank Brown over Gorman's opposition and were determined to control the legislature to enact taxation reform. Newspapers described the Alliance activity as "a cause of anxiety to the leading Democrats." "Most alarming was the possibility that the Alliance might even join with Baltimore's labor groups to form a radical new party—a specter raised by Alliance state president Hugh Mitchell of Port Deposit when he assailed both major parties for rejecting Alliance demands. Democratic leaders decided that "delicate and ingenious" steps were needed to control the Alliance men within the party.⁴⁸ Gorman's command of the party and state politics was also threatened from the right by the Independent Democrats, and their actions in the 1891 campaign provided the incentive for a second electoral change by the 1892 legislature. As in the past, they fused with the Republicans, doing so under the new Australian system by filing petitions to place their joint nominees on the ballot under the heading of "Independent Democrats" as well as in the Republican column. This enabled them to vote for the fusion candidates as Democrats rather than as Republicans, a disagreeable prospect in such a partisan age. Gorman, a firm believer in party government, denounced the possibility of independent success as "more objectionable even than Republican success."⁴⁹

In the 1892 legislature, then, Democrats attempted to constrain voters within the partisan harness by amending the ballot law. Their objective, as the *Sun* observed, was to "limit, if not destroy, the possibility of any independent action in politics by multiplying difficulties in the way of independent nominations," either as independents or as new parties. One new law prohibited listing again on the ballot any candidate nominated by petition if he were already listed as the nominee of a party. Henceforth, Independent Democrats would have to sacrifice their partisan identifications and vote as Republicans or else lose the effectiveness of a fusion campaign. State control of the electoral process thus restricted the electoral possibilities which had been available under the party-ticket system and worked to the advantage of the dominant party.⁵⁰

More immediately controversial was a second new law. Dubbed the Carter amendment, after Gorman's House leader, this measure applied only to Baltimore and made major changes in the process of nomination by petition. Rather than permitting petitions to be circulated freely, it required citizens to go in person to Baltimore City Hall to sign the petition papers before the Board of Election Supervisors and to swear and sign an affidavit that they were registered voters, intended to support the candidate, desired to have him elected, and would not aid any other candidate. This law prevented citizens from signing petitions simply to give everyone an opportunity to vote for the candidate of their choice by assisting

in placing his name on the ballot; it would also cause petitioners to lose at least half a day's work and pay; and by requiring them publicly to swear their voting intentions, it violated their voting privacy, effectively nullified the concept of a secret ballot, and subjected them to possible intimidation. It was expected that the difficulty, inconvenience, and expense would persuade most people not to try to nominate independent candidates. An attempt to organize a new party able to compete fully in Baltimore would be frustrated by the need for at least 4,400 voters, evenly distributed across the city's twenty-two wards, who were willing to make such personal sacrifices. Mugwump reformers, who often had organized independent candidacies in the past, condemned the Carter amendment as "a plan for making the nomination of any but machine candidates for the (City) Council almost impossible."⁵¹

Baltimore's labor organizations were even more vociferous in their opposition. Electrical Assembly 6280 of the Knights of Labor, one of the earliest and most active supporters of the Australian reform system, denounced the Carter amendment as destructive of popular rights, and other local assemblies as well as the Baltimore District Assembly 41 passed ardent resolutions against the measure. The Knights also sent delegations to Annapolis to lobby against this "disfranchising" measure. The *Critic* titled the measure "A bill to suppress independent candidacies in the city of Baltimore" and declared that it made the Australian ballot "an instrument of oppression, instead of one of freedom, which it was intended to be."⁵²

Democratic politicians agreed that the amended ballot law would "prevent any more independent candidates" and enjoyed the naiveté of their opponents. "No matter how often we fool the businessmen and innocent mullets," said one Baltimore machine politician, "they are always ready to be fooled again."⁵³

The political effect of the new ballot law was promptly demonstrated in the fall campaign when it effectively suppressed the new People's Party. Organized in August by members of the Farmers' Alliance and directed toward the labor organizations of Baltimore, the new party secured the necessary five hundred petitioners in each of the first, second, and fifth districts to nominate candidates for Congress and presidential elector but was prevented by the new law from nominating candidates in the two districts in Baltimore. "This law was passed after our party had obtained a foothold in other states, in order to keep us out of Maryland," charged Populist State Chairman Nelson Dunning of Sykesville. "It is a Democratic force bill to keep the People's Party out of this state." Dunning maintained that the Democrats themselves would find it difficult to make nominations under the legal restrictions but wisely noted "they were making laws for others, instead of themselves." He estimated that the ballot restrictions disfranchised five thousand voters in Baltimore, and the *Critic* agreed: "Many old labor men were in the party and are, no doubt, much discouraged. The so-called Australian ballot law militated against them very largely."⁵⁴

Thus the achievement of the Australian ballot "reform" and its extension to the whole state by 1892 did not end the partisan use of the electoral structure, and subsequent revisions in the election law would often follow the same pattern. Rather than weakening the machine or facilitating independent nominations and voting or fostering third parties, ballot legislation often had the opposite effect, at least in the short run. What ballot laws really accomplished was the expansion of the role of the state in the political process, and that expansion, in turn, permitted the politicians in power to use state authority to promote self-serving conditions of order. The *Baltimore Sun* noted this ironic consequence of electoral reform when it concluded that the Australian ballot law had become "an engine in the hands of those who at first dreaded and opposed its enactment, and against whose influence the law was intended to operate as a barrier and a safeguard."⁵⁵

NOTES

1. See Paul Kleppner, *The Third Electoral System, 1853–1892: Parties, Voters, and Political Cultures* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Albert C. E. Parker, "Beating the Spread: Analyzing American Election Outcomes," *Journal of American History*, 67 (1980): 61–87; Jean H. Baker, *Affairs of Party: The Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).
2. *Laws of Maryland*, 1874, chap. 229; *Laws of Maryland*, 1876, chap. 223; *Civil Service Reformer* (Baltimore) 2 (1886): 6 and 3 (1887): 25; *Baltimore American*, 26, 27 October 1886.
3. *Laws of Maryland*, 1874, chap. 490; *Baltimore Sun*, 20 August 1885.
4. *New York Times*, 7 May 1880.
5. *Baltimore Sun*, 11 September 1879; *Civil Service Reformer* 2 (1886): 5, 77–79.
6. *Revived Code of the Public General Laws of Maryland*, 1878, Art. 5, pp. 46–47. See Baker, *Affairs of Party*, pp. 306–311, for a useful description of voting in Baltimore County in 1864. Despite the beliefs of several historians, Maryland apparently never prohibited colored ballots.
7. *Baltimore American*, 2 November 1886; *Cumberland Daily Times*, 5 November 1888, 2 November 1889; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, 27 October 1875; *Baltimore Sun*, 7 November 1879.
8. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, 4 November 1875. The judge's dexterity was necessary, for Maryland attempted to prohibit pudding tickets by providing that multiple ballots found "deceitfully folded together" in the ballot box should be rejected. *Maryland Code*, 1860, Art. 35, p. 262.
9. Elihu S. Riley, *A History of the General Assembly of Maryland* (Baltimore: Nunn & Co., 1905), p. 389; *Baltimore True Democrat*, 26 October 1875; *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, 28 October 1875; Citizen quoted in *Baltimore Sun*, 8 November 1879.
10. *Hagerstown Mail*, 29 November 1889. For an excellent account of this practice in New Jersey, see John Reynolds, "'The Silent Dollar': Vote Buying in New Jersey," *New Jersey History*, 98 (1980): 191–211.
11. Albie Burke, "Federal Regulation of Congressional Elections in Northern Cities, 1871–1894" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1968); *Ex parte Siebold*, 100 U.S. 371 (1880).

12. *Hagerstown Mail*, 11 April 1890; Burke, "Federal Regulation," ii; *Maryland Laws*, 1872, chap. 208, 1874, chap. 61 and 361, 1880, chap. 375.
13. For a description of "army-style" campaigns, see Richard Jensen, "Armies, Admen, and Crusaders: Types of Presidential Election Campaigns," *History Teacher*, 2 (1969); 33–50.
14. *Maryland Laws*, 1874, chap. 250, 1884, chap. 190, 1886, chap. 189. Such restrictions had been decreed for Baltimore in 1860. *Maryland Code*, 1860, Art. IV.
15. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopedias*, 1879 (New York: D. Appleton, 1880), 596, 1881 (New York: D. Appleton, 1882), 534; *Baltimore American*, 23 October 1886.
16. The best study of the mugwumps remains John Sproat, "*The Best Men*": *Liberal Reformers in the Gilded Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968). For Baltimore, see *Civil Service Reformer*, *passim*, and Eric F. Goldman, *Charles J. Bonaparte, Patrician Reformer* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1943).
17. Charles J. Bonaparte to James H. Raymond, 14 May 1895, Bonaparte Papers, Library of Congress; *Civil Service Reformer*, 2 (1886): 6, 21–22 and 4 (1888): 39; *Baltimore American*, 30 October 1886; James B. Crooks, *Politics and Progress: The Rise of Urban Progressivism in Baltimore* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 14.
18. *Civil Service Reformer* 3 (1887): 11–12, 23–31; John R. Lambert, *Arthur Pue Gorman* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1953), 135; R. E. Wright, "Some Problems in City Government," An Address to the Landlords Mutual Protective Association, 26 November 1889; Margaret Law Callcott, *The Negro in Maryland Politics, 1870–1912* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), 42.
19. *Civil Service Reformer*, 5 (1889): 140; C. K. Yearley, *The Money Machines: The Breakdown and Reform of Governmental and Party Finance in the North, 1860–1920* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970), 1742–45.
20. *Baltimore Critic*, 16 June 1888; *Civil Service Reformer*, 4 (1888): 7; *Baltimore American*, 2, 3, 5 November 1886.
21. *Baltimore Sun*, 27 October 1877, 11 September 1879; *Baltimore American*, 28, 29, 31 October 1886.
22. *Baltimore American*, 25 October, 1 November 1886; *Baltimore Critic*, 9 June 1888.
23. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopedias*, 1887 (New York: D. Appleton, 1888), 457.
24. Ibid.; *Civil Service Reformer*, 4 (1888): 34.
25. *Civil Service Reformer*, 4 (1888): 30, 18; *Laws of Maryland*, 1888, chap. 155, 104, 112.
26. *Civil Service Reformer*, 4 (1888): 39, 42–3, 76; 5 (1889): 7.
27. Ibid., 4 (1888): 7; *Hagerstown Mail*, 3 January 1890.
28. *Baltimore Critic*, 14, 21 July 1888; *Baltimore Sun*, 18 March 1892.
29. *Civil Service Reformer*, 4 (1888): 21 and 5 (1889): 19, 138–9; *Appleton's Annual Cyclopedias*, 1889 (New York: D. Appleton, 1890), 533. The Knights were insistent that the voting rights of illiterates be protected and proposed the use of party vignettes on the ballot for that purpose. The Reform League's proposal caused its members to be castigated as "pseudo reformers." The Reform League, declared the *Port Tobacco Times*, an organ of the regular Democracy, "is always careful that none of its alleged reforms shall in any way impinge upon the ignorant colored vote." "This great league has always directed its energies at the white Democrats," the *Times* continued. "It would not have mattered that a few illiterate white Democrats should have been disfranchised by the system." *Port Tobacco Times*, 27 December 1889.
30. *Civil Service Reformer* 5 (1889): 107–9, 145; *Hagerstown Mail*, 13 December 1889.
31. *Hagerstown Mail*, 31 January 1890; *Appleton's Cyclopedias*, 1889, 533; *Civil Service Reformer*, 5 (1889): 138–39.

32. Callcott, *The Negro in Maryland Politics*, 50; *Civil Service Reformer*, 5 (1889): 137–38.
33. *Baltimore Critic*, 4 January 1890; *Cumberland Daily Times*, 11 January 1890; *Journal of the Knights of Labor* (Philadelphia), 23 January 1890.
34. *Hagerstown Mail*, 15, 22 November 1889; 3, 31 January, 21 February 1890; *Baltimore Critic*, 4 January 1890; *Journal of the Knights of Labor*, 23 January 1890.
35. *Hagerstown Mail*, 14 March 1890; *New York Times*, 17 March 1890.
36. *Baltimore Critic*, 1 March 1890; *Journal of the Proceedings of the Senate of Maryland*, 1890 (Annapolis: George Melvin, State Printer, 1890), 463, 1073; *New York Times*, 17 March 1890.
37. *Baltimore Sun*, 8 March 1892.
38. *Laws of Maryland*, 1890, chap. 538.
39. Ibid.; *Hagerstown Mail*, 11 April 1890; *Civil Service Reformer*, 6 (1890): 30; *New York Times*, 17 March 1890.
40. *Laws of Maryland*, 1890, chap. 538; *Cumberland Daily Times*, 11 January 1890.
41. *Laws of Maryland*, 1890, chap. 538. For this feature of ballot legislation, see John Reynolds and Richard L. McCormick, “Outlawing ‘Treachery’: Split Tickets and Ballot Laws in New York and New Jersey,” *Journal of American History*, 72 (1986): 839–58.
42. *Baltimore Sun*, 22, 23 October 1890; *New York Times*, 28 August 1891; *Congressional Record*, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1890, 21, pt. 7:6676; *Hagerstown Mail*, 12 September 1890; *Baltimore Critic*, 29 March 1890.
43. *Baltimore Sun*, 22 October 1890; *Lankford v. County Commissioners of Somerset County*, 73 Md. 105; *Hagerstown Mail*, 31 October 1890; *Baltimore American*, 1, 4 November 1890.
44. *Baltimore American*, 5 November 1890; *Hagerstown Mail*, 7 November 1890.
45. *Hagerstown Mail*, 17 October 1890. For this type of “deflationary” fraud, see Gary W. Cox and J. Morgan Kousser, “Turnout and Rural Corruption: New York as a Test Case,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 25 (1981): 646–63.
46. *Baltimore American*, 5 November 1890; *Baltimore Critic*, 26 March 1892.
47. *Appleton’s Annual Cyclopedia*, 1891 (New York: D. Appleton, 1892), 495.
48. *New York Times*, 20 July, 12 August 1891.
49. *Baltimore American*, 22, 24 October 1891.
50. *Baltimore Sun*, 8 March 1892; *Laws of Maryland*, 1892, chap. 236. This was not as strong a ballot restriction as the anti-fusion legislation enacted elsewhere, for the Maryland law still permitted a candidate nominated by two parties (as legally defined) to have his name listed in the ballot columns of each party; it simply restricted the freedom of “independents.” For this other legislation, see Peter H. Argersinger, “A Place on the Ballot”: Fusion Politics and Antifusion Laws,” *American Historical Review*, 85 (1980): 287–306.
51. *Laws of Maryland*, 1892, chap. 205; *Baltimore Sun*, 8, 24 March 1892; *Civil Service Reformer* 8 (1892): 32.
52. *Baltimore Critic*, 12, 19, 26 March 1892; *Baltimore Sun*, 18 March 1892.
53. *Baltimore Sun*, 15 March 1892.
54. *Baltimore American*, 28, 30 October 1892; *Baltimore Critic*, 5, 12 November 1892; *Baltimore Sun*, 11 August 1892.
55. *Baltimore Sun*, 8 March 1892. Subsequent revisions in Maryland’s election laws can be traced in Callcott, *The Negro in Maryland Politics*, and Crooks, *Politic and Progress*. For suggestive comments about the long-run effects of the Australian ballot in weakening party dominance in the electoral system, see John F. Reynolds, “Testing Democracy: Electoral Behavior and Progressive Reform in New Jersey,” *Historian*, 48 (1986): 231–54.

Comment

Judging this essay, "From Party Tickets to Secret Ballots," almost twenty years after its publication, I see two main ways in which it is important beyond simply analyzing Maryland politics in the late nineteenth century. First, it is one of the first articles that sought to treat the electoral structure not as an impartial given, simply a formal framework for politics itself, but as both the product and the cause of political actions. In thus stressing the interactive nature of political structures and political decisions, this essay contributed importantly to the development of what is now called, among both historians and political scientists, the "new institutionalism."

Second, this article (together with several others I wrote) directed attention to the existence and significance of "anti-fusion" laws, adopted not only by Maryland but by many states to constrict electoral opportunities and obstruct third parties, which had been both frequent and influential. These essays eventually became the historical basis for a challenge to the constitutionality of anti-fusion laws as repressive and undemocratic. This lawsuit, filed by a third party in Minnesota and supported by a lengthy brief by historians and political scientists, reached the United States Supreme Court in 1997. Rare, indeed, is a nineteenth-century historian's work of such demonstrable contemporary relevance! Unfortunately, the Supreme Court upheld anti-fusion laws, but in doing so demonstrated (as it did again in 2000 in *Bush v. Gore*) the "new institutionalist" emphasis that the institutions of government, including the electoral structure and the judiciary, are not impartial arenas but political forces.

PETER ARGERSINGER
Southern Illinois University

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Join the MdHS for a stirring and insightful account of American armed forces during the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Joseph Balkoski, Command Historian for the Maryland National Guard and author of several books chronicling the experiences of American citizen-soldiers in the European theatre, will discuss his most recent work, *Utah Beach* (Stackpole, 2005), which outlines U.S. airborne operations and the amphibious landing at Utah Beach on June 6, 1944. Tickets are \$10/MdHS Members, \$15/non-members and can be purchased by calling 410-685-3750 ext. 321.

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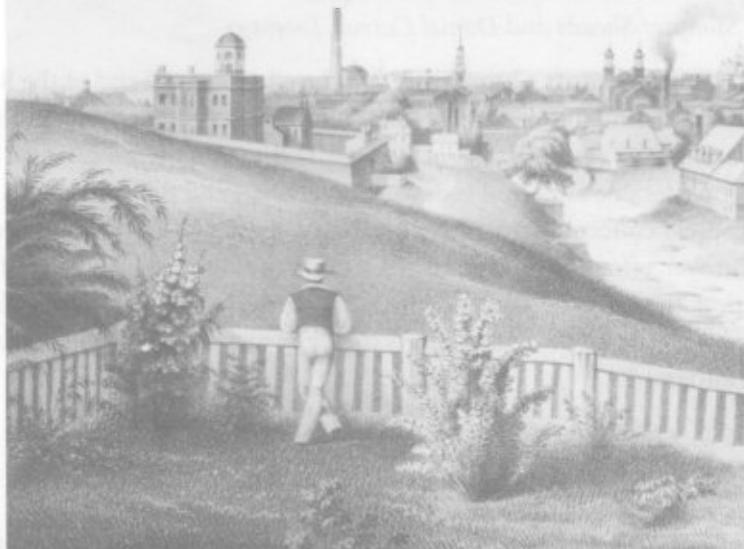
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